





THE LIBRARY
OF
THE UNIVERSITY
OF CALIFORNIA
LOS ANGELES



Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2008 with funding from
Microsoft Corporation

FROM THE HEART
OF THE ROSE



G. F. Watts, R.A.

FROM THE HEART OF THE ROSE

LETTERS ON THINGS NATURAL
THINGS SERIOUS, THINGS FRIVOLOUS

BY

HELEN MILMAN
(MRS. CALDWELL CROFTON)

JOHN LANE: THE BODLEY HEAD
LONDON AND NEW YORK MDCCCCI

Printed by BALLANTYNE, HANSON & Co.
At the Ballantyne Press

71
4518
C 35

TO
THE HON. MRS. JOHN DUNDAS
I DEDICATE
THESE SCATTERED THOUGHTS, FOR MANY HAVE
BEEN GATHERED IN HER PRESENCE

654248

CONTENTS

	PAGE
I. TO A LOVER OF BIRDS	1
II. ON MATTHEW ARNOLD'S POEMS	5
III. CORINNA'S LETTERS	9
IV. TO ONE WHO WRITES GARDEN BOOKS	27
V. ABOUT PEOPLE	29
VI. "I CANNOT DO MUCH," SAID A LITTLE STAR	33
VII. A LETTER FROM A MIDDY	35
VIII. A LETTER FROM SOUTH AFRICA	39
IX. A GARDEN IN JUNE	42
X. A LETTER FROM MRS. RITCHIE	47
XI. TWO LETTERS OF GILBERT WHITE'S	50
XII. A SHORT LETTER	57
XIII. ON THE SUBJECT OF A VISITORS' BOOK	58
XIV. ON MR. WATTS	61
XV. NOTES ON JUNE	67
XVI. TWO NEW SOCIETIES	71
XVII. TO A GIRL FRIEND	72

Contents

	PAGE
XVIII. A RIVER WALK	75
XIX. ON MANY SUBJECTS	82
XX. FROM NEWNHAM	86
XXI. FROM DR. HARRY ROBERTS	88
XXII. FROM E. L.	91
XXIII. FROM C. H. C.	94
XXIV. TO AN OLD CHUM	97
XXV. ON REVIEWS	99
XXVI. FROM THE LONG AGO	101
XXVII. INDIAN GARDENS	103
XXVIII. ABOUT TABLE MOUNTAIN	109
XXIX. ON MAGAZINE CLUBS	112
XXX. ABOUT SKETCHING	115
XXXI. PURE LITERATURE SOCIETY	121
XXXII. SPRING	122
XXXIII. TWO LETTERS. 1841, 1901	128
XXXIV. TO LUCIOLE	132
XXXV. IS CHIVALRY DEAD?	136
XXXVI. TO AN EDITOR	140
XXXVII. ON FLOWERS TO THE SICK	142
XXXVIII. AUGUST	145
XXXIX. IN ANSWER TO A QUESTION	153

Contents

	PAGE
XL. FROM A MAN OF LAW	154
XLI. TO ONE IN LOVE	160
XLII. JANUARY	162
XLIII. ON THE CHARACTER OF A SERVANT	166
XLIV. ON MANY SUBJECTS	167
XLV. TO MARGATE	176
XLVI. JULY	180
XLVII. VERSES FROM OVER THE SEA	184
XLVIII. FROM AUSTRALIA	186
XLIX. TO LITTLE MARY	190
L. THE FALKLAND MEMORIAL	191
LI. AURATUM LILIES	195
LII. ON THE GROWING OF BULBS	196
LIII. TWO POTTERIES	198
LIV. SLOE GIN	203
LV. TO A LOVER OF GARDEN BOOKS	204
LVI. A HUNTING LETTER	208
LVII. MONICA'S TEA-PARTY	213
LVIII. TO ONE INTERESTED IN PLANTS	215

PREFACE

MONICA opened her post-bag. She was sitting on the lawn in the Garden of Peace. The "heir of all the ages" was charging an invisible enemy across the grass. He tried in vain to attract his mother's attention, but she was wholly absorbed in her letters.

"Mother, there are some dear roses out," he said, but she never moved.

"There is a rabbit in the kalmia-bed," he shouted. Still no answer. Then he crept up and whispered in her ear, "Mother, I don't think the Horse Artillery soldiers are so very brave after all."

Down went the letters on the grass, and the heir of all the ages triumphed.

After the child disappeared into the wood Monica sat down to think again. She felt it was selfish to keep all her letters to herself. A sudden thought struck her. "I will give them to the world," she whispered; "I will fill up the book with my own letters, full of thoughts entrusted to me by others, and with

Preface

lessons life has taught me." She knew she had had an uneventful life, but it was very full, and her wish was to share all her sunshine with others. Perhaps her letters would reach unknown friends, and perchance might cheer, or amuse, if only for a moment, one less favoured than herself. Monica made up her mind not to betray her friends, or to print their real names, but she felt so grateful for the pleasure they had given her that she wanted the charm of her correspondence to reach "outside the garden."

I

To a lover of birds. 1901.

SO you want me to tell you what nests we have this year. Do you think, then, I have leisure moments to prate to you about my feathered friends? or do you think, if you pretend to take a profound interest in my garden, you will drag a letter from my laggard pen? I have but little time for letters, but remember silence gives consent to love. If you do not hear, then, you may be certain that I trust you entirely and your love. Some say this is an unsatisfactory solution, and that they would rather a little distrust and letters in addition! I take no notice of such suggestion, but will tell you of our nests. In the box outside my bedroom window, overlooking the rosary, a big tit built her nest; she laid her ten eggs and began to sit on them, and then one morning when I looked I found to my distress only two eggs and no sign of the mother-bird. The nest was not disturbed,

From the Heart of the Rose

and no egg-shells were left about. We think a mouse may have taken them, or perchance my enemy the sparrow. For days and days nothing happened, and we thought the nest deserted. At last back came the tits. They had examined other holes, but being weary of house-hunting, returned to their old quarters. They determined to try again, and soon ten more eggs appeared. This time they were all hatched, and at this moment ten little yellow mouths open wide as I lift the lid and peep in to see what they are all doing. On my other window-sill an impertinent sparrow has made her home. I am very angry; at the same time I have not the heart to turn her out. A fly-catcher and a chaffinch have built in the honeysuckle over the drawing-room window, and I verily believe, if the truth were told, there is a swallow's nest in one of the chimneys. Outside the back door, in full view of every back-door caller, a silly fly-catcher sits all day on her four brown eggs. Foolish bird! she flies off when any one passes, and she lives a miserable, unrestful life. I really cannot think why birds are so silly in this garden; they don't seem to think one bit before they make their homes. There is a darling jenny wren living in public in a laurel-bush just where you enter the kitchen garden.

From the Heart of the Rose

She does not even pretend to be out of sight. Certainly she has pulled a few laurel leaves together and firmly fastened them round the nest, but there it is in full view, with its little domed roof and moss-covered walls. We have a black-cap in the kalmia-bed, and a cole-tit, a marsh-tit, a blue-tit, and two big tits in the boxes. The big tits in the old stump have a lovely nest. They filled up the whole space with moss, and then made a cosy nest in one corner. We have never had a cole-tit in a bird-box before. Of course I could show you "thousands of thrushes' nests," as Dick would say. You can hardly walk about the garden without treading on young thrushes, or meeting a sleepy-looking baby thrush face to face on a bough—greenfinches, robins, and of course starlings, in their usual box in the beech-tree. As yet we have not found a cuckoo's egg. Don't you wonder how a cuckoo ever learns to say "Cuckoo!" as he has only pretending parents who can't say "Cuckoo!" at all? A French baby wouldn't talk French if brought up in an English nest? You need not take up this matter seriously, it will not bear investigation! I asked about the young cuckoo, but nobody will think it a subject worthy of study, and one asked me if I thought a cow would ever do anything

From the Heart of the Rose

but “moo!” which I must say I think is quite outside the question. Farmer Dick tells me of a thrush’s nest in a cauliflower, which seems a strange locality to choose. I suppose that family of young thrushes will be brought up as vegetarians. Now I am beginning to frivol, and so had better stop. A bullfinch began to build in the ivy on the house, but the nest was never finished. Bullfinches seem to begin nests all over the garden. Greenfinches of course we have, and blackbirds. The jays are most tiresome and unneighbourly, and rob the nests in a bold, wicked way. I wish they could be taught better manners. I hear the dear kingfishers in their hole over the Wishing Well, and of course nests are numberless outside the garden. Dick says he has found a hawk’s nest in a rose-bush, which you may believe or not as you see fit. The chaffinch’s nest in the fork of a rhododendron-bush is the most beautiful thing I have ever seen, so small and compact, with bits of brown wool twined in and out, and all covered with lichen. Nothing fascinates me more than birds’ nests. I should love to show them to you.

MONICA.

II

*To a niece who is reading Matthew
Arnold's poems.*

YOUR letter interested me very much. I am glad you are taking up the study of each poet separately. One learns so very much more that way, and for the time being you become thoroughly imbued with the poet's ideas. If I can find my Wordsworth and Shelley notes, I will send them to you; but you know how dreadfully untidy I am, I can never find anything. Somebody once tried to comfort me by saying that all genius's are untidy, so when I cannot find a thing I try to comfort myself with that thought; but after searching for about an hour, I come to the conclusion it would really be much nicer to be tidy, and I cheerfully give up the genius idea. But I am wandering from my subject, namely, Matthew Arnold's poems. They are very beautiful, but so utterly *hopeless*. I once had to preside at a meeting

From the Heart of the Rose

where we discussed his poems, and I was asked to define his gospel. As they gave me notice beforehand, and knowing my opinion was little worth, I wrote to Mr. R. H. Hutton (who was then alive), and I cannot do better than send you extracts from his letter:—

“The only thing exactly *approaching* a gospel (he writes) which can be attributed to Matthew Arnold is the couplet—

“ ‘But tasks in hours of insight willed
Can be thro’ hours of gloom fulfilled.’

—which has been really useful to many persons whom I knew; but it is a very feeble gospel. On the other hand, he has certainly taught very many that there are saints in the disguise of all sorts of callings, who have remained unspotted from the world. Christian and pagan, king and slave, soldier and anchorite. . . . Distinctions we esteem as grave are nothing in their sight.

“ ‘They do not ask who pined unseen,
Who was on action hurl’d,
Whose one bond is, that all have been
Unspotted from the world.’

But I should say that the greatest service he has done the world—though it is almost the opposite of a gospel—has been to teach

From the Heart of the Rose

it, not only in England but all over the world—that the life of those who have lost their Christianity and gained nothing in its place is, and must be, ‘forlorn.’

“ ‘Wandering between two worlds, one dead,
The other powerless to be born,
With nowhere yet to rest my head,
Like these, on earth I wait forlorn.
Their faith, my tears, the world deride,
I come to shed them at their side.’ ”

This is not a gospel, but it may *lead to* a gospel. . . .”

Is not that splendid? One great admirer of Matthew Arnold present remarked that I was quite wrong in saying the poems were *hopeless*, and that such an assertion simply proved my ignorance. He pointed to the lines at the end of the lyric poem entitled “Progress”—

“But that ye think clear, feel deep, bear fruit well,
The Friend of man desires,”

and told us that that one line carried a gospel in itself. I do not think myself it is Christ-like; there is no self-sacrifice there. In Mr. Hutton’s essay you will find he writes: “He (Matthew Arnold) gives us no new strength to bear. He gives us no new light of hope. He gives us no new

From the Heart of the Rose

nerve of faith." Why should the sea bring
"The eternal note of sadness" to our
hearts? Because to him the world

"Hath really neither joy, nor love, nor light,
Nor certitude, nor peace, nor help for pain."

There are others in the world who *feel* the
nearness of Christ, so all the darkness is
turned to light. Do not ask me for criti-
cism, I am no critic; but I can tell you
what thought lifts me up on to a higher
plane, and what does not.

MONICA.

III

CORINNA'S LETTERS

Enid asked how Corinna was getting on in her new home. So Monica enclosed the only letters she had had from her. They tell their own story.

I

DEAR DARLING OLD MONICA,—I have not had a moment to write before. You have no idea how difficult it is to get into a house without servants. Of course I engaged some, but at the very last moment, owing to the "cussedness" of the human race, they all failed me except one elderly female, who I now have reason to believe was more or less mad. She very soon took to her bed with inflammation of the lungs, which the local doctor called lumbago. We carted her to the hospital, a ghastly drive of ten miles. "You never know what may happen on the way,

From the Heart of the Rose

ma'am," said a village woman as we started. Ted went on the box—and we mercifully all arrived alive. So there we were, *planté la*, without a soul. Next morning we crept out of bed and lit the kitchen fire, then back to bed and rest awhile to wait for hot water. I cooked the breakfast. You have no idea, Monica, what a lot of bacon it takes to make a dish. I no sooner cut slices than they frizzled away in the frying-pan. Ted promised to wash up, but it took him a long time, for he washed his hands between every plate, and said it really was thoughtless of us both to have our plates so dirty. We did not clean the house much, for of course in the country things never get very dirty. About luncheon-time Mr. Lewis turned up. Ted gave a gasp, but I didn't mind a bit. "I suppose you have come to lunch," was my greeting in an airy way, as if we always expected guests. "I suppose I have," he answered, smiling. "Then you stay on one condition," I said, "and that is that you help to wash up. We have only got pork pie, for we live on pork pie now." He looked a little surprised, for he lunched out pretty often, but had never been asked to wash up before, and at first he thought it a joke. (He is in the — Hussars, you know.) He didn't think it a joke, though, when he

From the Heart of the Rose

found himself in the scullery with an apron on and his sleeves turned up. I pretended I didn't see the pathetic appeal in his eyes as he glanced at the dirty plates. I thought to myself, What Ted can do, you can do, and I didn't care if he was smart or not. I think he really enjoyed it, but he didn't come to lunch again at once; in fact, not until Ted told him we had proper servants. That night I told Ted we really *must* have a cook; I was beginning to feel worn out. So next day he sallied forth into the highways and by-ways, and returned in triumph, like a conquering hero. "A cook would wait on me at two o'clock." I never saw a man so proud in all my life. At two o'clock she arrived, and I interviewed her with a light heart. "Can you cook?" "Yes, ma'am." "Can you do nice little dishes?" (I had no idea what on earth you ought to ask a cook.) "I can moind the meat." *That* sounded decidedly hopeful. "Can you make sweets?" "If you make the puddings I can moind them." Despair! I nearly boxed Ted's ears with fury. I never went near him for quite half-an-hour, and I wouldn't believe him when he said it wasn't in the least his fault. We then got a local woman from the first cottage we came to, and she cooked a chicken for

From the Heart of the Rose

dinner. Oh ! Monica, my angel, the thought of that chicken makes me shiver even now. *It had not been trussed.* Have you ever seen a chicken cooked *au naturel* ? I devoutly hope you never will. Its legs were stretched wide as if in appeal to heaven. Its neck—— Oh ! I don't know where its neck was. I don't know where any portion of it was ; it was everywhere, and all over yellow blisters. Yellow blisters which went pop when you cut them. I went without dinner, and afterwards was told that the so-called cook was weeping in the kitchen because I wouldn't eat, and refused to be comforted. I found her, a damp little heap in the scullery. "The chicken looked horrid," I said sternly. "You never even trussed it, it was not a bit disguised." "Well, ma'am, you see, where I was before (sob) the gentleman always liked a chicken (sob) to come to table looking as much like a chicken as possible" (sob). "Then please remember that I like a chicken to come to table looking as little like a chicken as possible ;" and, Monica dear, I walked majestically away. The next cook arrived at six o'clock by telegraph from London. She ate up all our dinner and drank the remaining bottles of beer. I saw what she was, so sent her back in tears, with thanks, at ten o'clock the next morning.

From the Heart of the Rose

It is a long lane, &c., and we are settled down now and divinely happy. Ted laughs and says even I am enjoying proper meals at last, and he rather gloats over my experiences. I got Mrs. Bing to come to me then, but as her baby was only a month old she had to bring it too. I told her she might if she would *faithfully* promise it should never cry when visitors called. It would have been so embarrassing. I believe the baby passed its days with its mouth full of sugar, but it never uttered a sound—and it lived all right. We had great fun arranging the furniture. Fixing the big bed up was a great difficulty. I felt sure we should never manage it, for it arrived in hundreds of little bits. “My dear girl, leave it to me,” said Ted loftily; “it’s perfectly easy. I’ve put together dozens and dozens of beds.” “Oh! indeed,” I said, “I never knew you had been in a furniture business.” He went away in a huff to do it all alone. Presently Captain Edmunds came over from Aldershot to see Ted, and he was called upstairs to help. I remained below. Presently the garden boy was sent for, but the door was kept religiously shut. At last I could bear the suspense no longer, and I ventured upstairs and peeped in. The two gentlemen were sitting disconsolately on the floor

From the Heart of the Rose

among the unfitted fragments of brass and iron, and the garden boy was staring vacantly, scratching his head the while. Oh! Monica, how I laughed. I ached all over with laughing, and at last the men laughed too, and we simply couldn't stop. "I don't even know what the beastly thing looks like when it is done. If you *will* buy——" "Ted! I thought you had put dozens and——" "Oh! shut up;" and then Captain Edmunds begged me to help, and I am proud to say at last we got the bed "fixed up." I really mustn't bore you with more at present, but will write again soon. Love and a hug from—Yours ever lovingly,

CORINNA.

II

MONICA DARLING,—Burglars have been our last excitement. Don't be frightened, they were not *real* burglars. Mrs. Bing woke us up in the middle of the night, and stood at the door shaking and quaking. "Will you please come, ma'am? there are burglars in the house; they have been using the file, and now are using the chisel." It was so circumstantial. We sallied forth with candle and poker, but, of course, nobody was there. Several other nights we have been

From the Heart of the Rose

roused by "footsteps," and at last Ted, who kept awake hour after hour, spotted the thief, and he whispered to me that he was going to creep out of bed and see who it was. He reached the window, and peered out into the broad daylight, and—saw the thief. Guess what he was doing? Oh, Monica! guess quick. He was setting a mole-trap (by request) on the rockery!—Tableau. You will be glad to hear we have started chickens. Ted brought a dear and precious hen back from his mother's the other day. It was in a hamper, and he pretended that it didn't belong to him, for it began to cackle loudly on the platform, and the dear thing laid an egg there and then to show its good feeling. Wasn't it nice of it, Monica? It has never laid any since. Perhaps it heard Ted swear, or perhaps its feelings were hurt at Reading station, for those dreadful porters would hold it upside down. Ted said he lost his temper, and hit the porter with his hat-box, and the porter didn't like it. I want to keep ducks and dear little bantams and pigeons and guinea-pigs, but Ted doesn't encourage me in my love for the brute creation. He says he knows quite well that I should feed them for about one day, and then he would have to look after them for ever afterwards.

From the Heart of the Rose

I don't think our gardener is a *great* success. He knows nothing at all about gardening, but he has made an apron out of an old sack and some string, and Ted likes that, and thinks it betokens a thrifty nature. I don't myself care to see a gardener tending my flowers, elegantly attired in an old sack; but I suppose Ted knows best. I have got a real cook at last, and she *is* so pretty; I wish you could see her. And fancy, Monica, I always have rose-leaves, real rose-leaves, in my finger-bowls at dessert. It was my own idea, quite. Ted *never* smokes in the drawing-room, and we always say grace, and he wears a high hat to church, so we are rather high-toned. Monica, my angel, this is the dearest little house in the world, and we want you badly.—Your loving
CORINNA.

III

MY MONICA,—I have such news for you. Something really has happened at last, something much better than burglars or babies. I am simply aching to tell you all about it, and if you are not excited too, I shall be very very angry. Ted says—no, I won't tell you what Ted says, or I shall never get to my story. It is a sign of decrepit old age when you

From the Heart of the Rose

stray about searching aimlessly for the point of your story. So I suppose I am getting decrepit. Oh! I forgot to tell you, Monica, I found a real white hair in my head the other morning, quite snow-white. I suppose the cooks turned that hair white, or store-lists. Store-lists are *awful* things. One finds so many things in the book one doesn't want, and one forgets the things one does want. Well, now to begin. We were sitting at lunch the other day eating resurrection pie, when Snap suddenly leapt out of the window and on to the lawn barking furiously. Ted thought something terrible had happened; I only thought somebody had come to lunch, and there was no lunch for somebody. Snap continued to bark, and we rushed out. What do you think we saw just over the paling in the field? I suppose, in your gentle way, Monica, you would suggest a stoat, or a wounded heron, or a hawk murdering a poor little helpless bird. Not at all; it was a balloon, a huge war balloon, and the men in it were shouting for help. Of course we all ran, and in the deserted landscape men appeared as if by magic; they must have been hiding in the rabbit-burrows, for they simply arrived like the mythical baby "out of the everywhere into here." You don't know what a lot of excitement there is about

From the Heart of the Rose

the descent of a balloon. Such a heap of things might happen. Sometimes men even get killed. Well, the ropes of this particular balloon, after getting entangled in about a hundred trees, were safely pulled to earth, and out stepped a sergeant of Engineers and—what do you think? Why, “a captain of the Queen’s Navee” in full uniform. I gasped as Ted offered lunch in his usual lordly way, without apparently a ghost of a blush at the memory of that last helping which entirely emptied the dish. Luckily my cook (you know, the pretty one, who is a real treasure), saved the situation for me by cooking impossible dishes out of nothing, for she knew her master’s little way. We looked sternly at that naval captain, and I longed to ask, “What are you doing, sir, in a war balloon? Does your mother know you are wandering in the air?” But he disarmed all doubt and made friends at once in that jolly way naval men have. Of course, Monica, my lady of a garden dedicated to peace, you will take this as a slur on the army; I never knew any one stand up for guns and soldiers as you do. I can’t think why . . . perhaps, though, I can guess. The huge rocking monster was tethered in the field, and I suppose the sergeant had lunch in the background. The naval captain

From the Heart of the Rose

told us one rather good story. His sister had just engaged a young servant at Alder-shot, and thought it right to warn her about the iniquities of the ordinary "Tommy." The girl looked at her mistress gravely and said, "My grandfather was a soldier, and my father was a soldier, and I don't care *that* for a soldier," and she snapt her fingers haughtily. That girl had good spirit. After lunch the naval captain departed in a fly, which also arrived from nowhere; and then Ted and I went into the field, and before you could say "Jack Robinson" (only I know you wouldn't say such a vulgar thing, Monica dear) I had jumped into the basket, and was soon over the wood with my heart in my mouth. Of course I was tethered, I mean the balloon was. I wouldn't go in a loose balloon for anything on earth or sky. The field looked so far away, and the river was winding about everywhere, and I could see the village and castle; but to tell you the honest truth I really saw very little, for I felt as if I was sailing away into space, and should never see my little home again. When I came down Ted went up, and I felt much more miserable, for I thought he would be lost for ever and ever. Soon after he descended, more sappers arrived breathless, asking if any

From the Heart of the Rose

one had seen a balloon? Lost, stolen, or strayed, a war balloon, warranted to go in the opposite direction to that intended by the occupants. Being reassured by the balloon itself, which was staring them in the face, they pitched a tent in our field, and in the evening the whole village came up, and had aerial trips for love. How they screamed and tittered. I think the part they liked best was being lifted into the cradle by the sergeant, and then the fall into his arms as they came out. He reassured the timid misses and was most gallant in his attentions. It was really a most picturesque scene, I assure you, Monica, and as I was there to see that all was carried on within the bounds of strict decorum, you need not look grave, dear madam. Next morning the colonel of all balloons appeared on the scene, and many young officers, and the sergeant introduced them to me with the air of a courtier. The colonel said women must *never* go up in the balloon, not even when it was tethered, so I looked very grave and entirely agreed with him. I did not mention the flight of a hundred and one maids in the air the night before—of course you would have told him, but then you would not have been wise. The sergeant told the lieutenant, who told the

From the Heart of the Rose

captain, who told the major, who told the colonel, who told me, that the men said they had never had such a pleasant camping-ground or had been done so well. This I feel sure meant a hot breakfast, and accounts for the fact that our breakfast was a very scanty one. Now what do you think of this as an adventure? It really was splendid fun. I loved it, so did the servants. I *wish* you had been here. I can picture you trying to get into the cradle without the help of the sergeant! Never mind, I can't take life seriously just yet!—Yours ever,

CORINNA.

[The sequel to this story is interesting. The sergeant, who Corinna felt was a really good honest soldier, as all Royal Engineers must be, made away with tons of zinc at Aldershot, escaped the law, fought on the Boer side in South Africa, was finally wounded, taken prisoner, and recognised. I cannot tell you his end, simply because every paper gave him a different one.

MONICA.]

IV

DEAR OLD MONICA,—We have given a garden-party, and I am simply aching to tell

From the Heart of the Rose

you all about it. To most people a garden-party would be a garden-party, but with us it was an EVENT. The first thing we did was to send out about a hundred invitations to friends in London, as well as here in the depths of the country, and to order a band. When the letters were all posted and gone beyond all recall, we simply looked at each other and gasped; we felt as if we had done an awful and venturesome deed. "My dear girl," Ted said, in would-be trembling tones, "how are you going to get out of the wood?" Of course it was a facer. A big garden-party and a supper afterwards for London guests, and only a limited number of maid-servants, and no accommodation. "It will be all right," I said airily, with a weight like lead on my heart. "Something will turn up!" And faith has its reward, for the first thing to "turn up" was a butler. He simply grew out of nothing in the garden. A strange place, forsooth, for a butler to be found growing! For you, dear Monica, I will solve the mystery, but only for you. Our garden boy has a brother, so you will say at once, "What relation is Dick to Tom?" Not at all. This brother was a butler in a big place in Yorkshire, and was home for a month's holiday. He offered his services

From the Heart of the Rose

to me for love, so what could I want more? It reminded me of the "Swiss Family Robinson," finding a butler growing on a rose-bush. Don't you remember they found hot rolls and cotton garments and frying-pans all ready to hand on their desert island. I felt very happy, for a butler gives such an air to a small party, or rather a big party in a small place. The next thing that happened was this. The village heard I was going to give a party, so they all offered to come and help. I can only tell you that on the day itself the back regions were simply *crowded* with helpers. They tumbled over each other, and nobody knew in the least what to do, but every one was happy, and every one enjoyed it. I had the summer-house by the pond filled with tables of strawberries and cream in little china basins, and we turned the lawn into a summer drawing-room under the cedars, with comfortable chairs, and tables covered with sketches and garden books, so that for the time being we might pass for being intellectual. There were bowls of sweet peas and mignonette everywhere. Then in strange out-of-the-way corners my guests came on old oaken tables, with fruit thereon and macedoine. The band, of course, played divinely—there

From the Heart of the Rose

is nothing like music, after all, to cheer the savage guest. The great joke was, we dressed up the pretty farmers' daughters—no, I mean the farmers' pretty daughters—in our tall parlour-maid's clothes, and our vicar spent all his afternoon in a series of spasmodic starts, because he kept recognising faces in new and strange garb, and in racking his brain trying to remember who was who. Amelia was staying with us, and she had to unstalk strawberries all the morning, while I macedoineed fruit. Monica dear, I hope *never* to see a macedoine again. Of course none of us were ready when the carriages arrived from the station, but it didn't matter. Every one was in great spirits. The only thing that annoyed me was this: everybody utterly refused to treat my party seriously; they would all think it was a joke, which was so rude of them. The butler was the only grave thing about the whole show, and he looked at me a little reprovingly, which made me feel uncomfortable. Having to smile so much made me uncomfortable too, and my mouth got quite stiff. When people are coming to meet you across a lawn, it doesn't do to begin to smile too soon, or it becomes a fixed grin, which looks horrid! Oh, what fun it all was!

From the Heart of the Rose

There was no big catastrophe. Every one said they enjoyed it, and I really believe they did. If only you could have been there, Monica, I should have had nothing else to wish for. All the right people came, and a good many of the wrong, and the garden was rather small for them to jostle in; but the nut-walk made a dividing line, and Ted is such a *neutral* soul, so they all felt at home. You say I am unconventional; I hope indeed I am. Unconventional people can do much more what they like, and are not trammelled by petty laws of society. Why does anything matter? Of course I don't mean things like dressing for dinner. I couldn't eat my dinner—I was going to say undress—but I mean unless I was properly dressed; and I know that dinner without soup is only a meal. But I mean leaving cards and calling and keeping up appearances—pretending to be much better off than you really are, and liking certain people because they are rich (ignoring soap, candles, and mustard), and disliking people because they only live in small houses, and have no footman. Oh! it's a hollow world, Monica dear. I *wish* people were more real. I wish every one was as happy as we are on our tiny income. Life is one beautiful dream,

From the Heart of the Rose

and you are a dear old duck.—Your ever
loving
CORINNA.

To Corinna.

. . . I was much amused by your letter about the balloon. I wish I had been there. Last night, turning over a book of prints belonging to A., I came on one of Vincent Lunardi, "The first Aeronaut in the English Atmosphere." The print was published June 25, 1785, and is called "The three favourite Aerial Travellers." Vincent Lunardi took care to take a very pretty woman up in his balloon, Mrs. Sage by name, and she is described as "The first Female Aeronaut," and they took one "George Biggin" as a chaperone; so you see a hundred and seventeen years ago a woman was as foolish as you are! Does that comfort your heart?
MONICA.

IV

To one who writes garden books.

DO go on writing garden books. Dwellers in our great cities turn to them. I only heard this morning from one living in the heart of Leeds. "The scent of your roses and the echo of the Dawn Chorus have found their way into the rather dreary surroundings which make up the East End of Leeds. . . . Often when the streets are hot and dusty, and when the longing is great to go and leave my work to look at the beauty of the country, I betake myself to a nature book and find there a solace denied to those who live in mean streets. I remember reading not long ago that we had ceased to care for beauty, and only read about it instead, but I don't think it is true, and I hope you and others who both love God's handiwork in nature and have the gift of describing it, will go on doing so with His blessing on your work." This is splendid encouragement, is it not?

From the Heart of the Rose

I feel very grateful to the writer. As I sit in my garden listening to the birds, I often think of the workers in towns, and wish they could rest here awhile.

MONICA.

V

About people Monica met.

YOU ask me how my book is getting on. It is growing daily, but not a bit in the way I meant it to. I sketched out an idea beforehand, but nothing happens as I planned it. My children utterly refuse to do the deeds and say the words I want them to. Now I just let them go their own way, and I sit and write down what they do. To me all my characters are alive. I never begin to write until I know them well. I actually see them do the things they do, and I never can force myself to write anything. I remember once introducing a true story of a child, and making one of my characters do it. The first time I saw Mr. Hutton after the book was published, in that hallowed room at the *Spectator* office, he was telling me so kindly how he liked my child. "Your children are so natural," he said, "even when they do impossible things they do them naturally; except where Boy

From the Heart of the Rose

did 'so and so'—that is impossible." "But that was perfectly true!" I exclaimed. "Yes, I daresay," he answered gently, stroking his beard as he always used to do, "but it is dragged in and bad." I wrote an article for the *Spectator* one day, and when it appeared the first sentence was missing. "I hope you will forgive me," wrote Mr. Hutton, "but an article should never begin on too high a key, people want preparing for it." Writing is a very absorbing occupation, that is the danger of it. I begin to think a housewife ought never to be an author! One longs to shut oneself up all alone with pen and paper, and then write till one drops. It is so difficult to lift oneself out of the atmosphere of a book. H.'s grandmother, author of "Emelia Wyndham" (who, I think, may be classed among the first women writers, for she came directly after Miss Burney, Jane Austen, Mrs. Radcliffe, Mrs. Sherwood, and that generation), wrote at a fixed time every morning (*never* at night), directly after ordering dinner and household affairs, and she never wrote for more than two hours at a time. She began her novels in 1834 with "Two Old Men's Tales," which was published anonymously, and which created quite a sensation at the time. She pub-

From the Heart of the Rose

lished eighteen novels altogether, and "The Reformation in France," which — until it was known to be written by a woman! — was the text-book on the subject at Oxford. She was so dissatisfied with "Emelia Wyndham" that she was on the point of throwing it into the fire, when her daughter Louisa persuaded her not to, and it was by far the most popular of all her novels. She always read her novels aloud to her daughters, when she had written them, to see their effect. She always arranged her plots before she began to write, and very seldom were her people drawn from life—they were her own imagination of character and action. I remember as a little child seeing Mrs. Marsh in her house in Lowndes Street, where men and women of letters gathered round her. She was very awe-inspiring, and always wore a white shawl. Myself, I find it difficult to write at a fixed hour every day. I like writing in the evening, but seldom do so. "Never trust what you write at night," Bishop Thorold said to me one night when I was dining at the Castle, and had the privilege of sitting between the Bishop and "A. K. H. B." I remember I felt very much alarmed because they were so extremely nice to me, and both deserted their neighbours to talk to me all the time. I do not

From the Heart of the Rose

think you could have found two men possessing such distinct personality. Alas! they have both passed away now. Their tasks were finished. "A. K. H. B." was dressed in black velvet knee-breeches, shoe buckles, lace ruffles, and all. I feel proud to think he was so kind to me. I certainly felt just a little frightened when he began to examine me on my great-uncle's (Dean Milman's) books, "The History of the Jews," "Latin Christianity," and such light reading! But he forgot to ask me questions when he became interested in hearing about "My Dean," as I used to call my father's uncle when I was a very very small child. Dear old Dean! I can see him now through the mist of years, with his beautiful face and bent back, as with trembling fingers he fastened a gold chain round my neck, from which hung a torquoise cross containing a tiny piece of his snow-white hair at the back, and our initials entwined. I was too young to appreciate the honour of the gift then, but I value it now among my greatest treasures. This long letter will weary you, but directly one begins on reminiscences one is tempted to ramble on.

MONICA.

VI

To one who is discontented with her lot.

SO you do not feel it is enough to "help lame dogs over stiles." Perhaps I cannot do better than send you enclosed. The words came to me from over the sea, and I love them.

"Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might."

" 'I CANNOT do much,' said a little star,
 'To render the dark world bright,
My silvery beams will not reach far
 Through the folding gloom of night :
But I'm only part of God's great plan,
So I'll gladly do the best I can.'

'What can be the use,' said a fleecy cloud,
 'Of the little drops I hold ?
They will scarcely bend the lily proud,
 If caught in her cup of gold ;
But I'm only part of God's great plan,
And my drop I'll give as best I can.'

From the Heart of the Rose

A child went merrily out to play,
But thought, like a silver thread,
Went winding in and out all day
Through the happy golden head :
My mother has said, ' Do all that you can,
For you are a part of God's great plan.'

She knew no more than the shining star,
Or the cloud with its chalice full ;
How, why, or for what, all strange things are,
She was only a child at school ;
But she said : ' I'm part of God's great plan,
And must do His work the best I can.'

Then she helped another child along
Where the road was rough to the feet ;
And she sang in her heart a little song
Which we all thought passing sweet—
' If I am part of the Master's plan,
I'll do and I'll do,—the best I can.'

So let us help, as we go our way
In the journey before us all ;
To lighten the burden day by day
Of some who might stumble and fall,
But for the touch of the stronger man
Who can and will ' DO THE BEST HE CAN.' ”

VII

*A Letter from a Middy on board H.M.S.
"Rattlesnake" at Zanzibar.*

MY DEAR AUNT MONICA,—We have had such exciting times out here that I haven't had time to write to you before. You may have thought I was shut up in Ladysmith, but I'm *not*, as you'll see by this address. Some of our chaps had to go up with the 4.7 guns, however, and there they are hard and fast, and playing Old Harry with the Boer guns of position. I *do* envy them, I can tell you, for I hate these cheeky Boers, and would like to give them a lyddite shell or two, and see them scuttle and run like so many rabbits. They are exactly like bunnies, you know, amongst the rocks and in their trenches and rifle-pits, and won't come out in the open and fight in grim earnest. The Admiral doesn't altogether like having to land so many men, but the army chaps can't do without them, you see, and so it's a feather in our caps,

From the Heart of the Rose

and we jolly well enjoy helping them to run the show. We've been patrolling the coast for six weeks, and overhauling all the steamers bound for Lourenço Marques; but this was most awfully slow work, and we were jolly glad when we were ordered up here for our skipper to interview the Sultan of Zanzibar, who has been playing up about some rot or another—something about the slave trade, I think. I rather hope to get some prize-money later on, when the S.W. monsoon sets in, and perhaps we'll have a fight with some of these rascals of slave-dealers. It's simply disgusting the way the beggars behave to the wretched Africans they take prisoner up country. They ought to be strung up or shot, that's the way I would treat them. Of course we middies take a loaded revolver with us if we go in chase of them, and a cutlass too, if we like. The Arab captains really show fight sometimes, and *then* it isn't all jam, I can tell you, for they are fierce enough when their blood is up, and are muscular athletic chaps, with a human cargo under hatches worth a lot of money to them. I know how fond of dogs you are, so I'm going to send you a yarn or two about our skipper's Airedale terrier "Jingo." Before we sailed from Portsmouth we were

From the Heart of the Rose

lying alongside the wharf at the dockyard, and the skipper who had been at home on leave for three or four days rejoined his ship, bringing his dog with him for the first time; but Jingo got wind of a rat in the dockyard and was left behind, the skipper coming on board without him. A few minutes afterwards Jingo, awfully out of breath, came rushing up and tried to board the ship by the entry port; but the fool of a sentry thinking he was some stray cur, progged at him with his rifle and shouted, "Clear out from there, you whelp, d'ye hear?" Poor Jingo got such a sudden fright that he started back and fell overboard with a most tremendous splash; and as he couldn't swim a bit, things looked a little black for him, but Joe Mullins, the captain of the maintop, and a great pal of mine, happened to be looking out of a port, and saw all that happened. In a second he had his pumps off, and had plunged overboard after the dog. Of course Joe brought him safely ashore, and was complimented like anything by the skipper, who by this time had realised that it was *his* dog that had nearly come to an untimely end. You should have seen the sentry's face. It was as white as a sheet, and the beggar was trembling in his shoes, but I don't think

From the Heart of the Rose

after all he was punished. Joe Mullins *does* spin such good yarns. You see I'm the mid of his top, and so he tells me all his best; but some of them have to be taken with a grain of salt! *you know!!!* I was going to tell you about Jingo and the Sultan of Zanzibar's dog, but must leave that for another time, as the epistle will be jolly well over weight. We get oranges here at 3d. a hundred, ripping ones too. I wonder if you will be reading this letter in that pretty summer-house in the garden where you so often let me tuck in at strawberries and cream. There are no strawberries like yours, and the cream that came from Devonshire was A 1. My love to all. I hope you are quite well. Your aff. nephew,

VIII

A letter came from South Africa. Though it made Monica laugh, it brought the war very near to her. Still, it must be the grandest thing in the world to be wounded for your Queen and country, and five bullets seem comparatively a small allowance.

HERE I am in hospital, having had a ripping time with brother Boer. I daresay you heard I made a blooming target of myself. It wasn't particularly pleasant, but I suppose all's fair in love and war. Some awfully amusing things happened during our little show, which simply made me yell, although I was in such a beastly funk. There was one covey behind a rock next to me who was in great form, and one could really quite believe he was enjoying a pheasant battue, and that rocketers were coming over his head. He lay very prone on his you-know-what, stuck his rifle straight up in the air, and fired for all he was worth.

From the Heart of the Rose

I doubt if he saw master Boer all day. And another silly ass, a Yeo boy, got hit through the ankle, and being in such a beastly funk that he was killed, he actually did die before evening. We had a ripping time in the ambulances; directly they put us in, the niggers got frightened and the mules stampeded for all they were worth. As you can imagine, it was simply ripping, as trees, rocks, and ant-heaps did not impede them in the slightest. I thought the burghers were not at all a bad lot; one cove of theirs rushed into my shelter which I had on picket and bagged my purse. My skipper, who was there, told the commandant, who immediately rushed up to the man, took the purse away, and gave him fifteen of the best with his sjambok. They do ripping things in our hospital. A wretched cove here, who was hit through the tummy and was almost dead by the time he got in here, revived a bit the other day and said he thought he could manage something better than milk. The doctor said, "Right you are," and immediately sent him a bit of the toughest of trek oxen I have ever met, and a bottle of stout. Needless to say he had a bit of a painy-ache that night. There was great excitement in the camp here the other day, some of the fellows told me.

From the Heart of the Rose

A fellow in the —— Fusiliers, who was wounded at P——'s Hill and had just come out from home again, joined his regiment in the Brigade. He had got seventeen bullets in him, and you can't imagine the rush there was of fellows wanting to bathe with him in the river close by. I believe he was most amusing in the way he told how he got them all, but I am afraid the story is not quite fit, even for you, dear auntie. I'm afraid I must shut up now, as I'm just about to be decorated with blue chiffon round my head. You cannot think how becoming blue chiffon is. Love to every one.
—Your affec'. nephew. ————

P.S.—Mind you have fried sole for breakfast the morning I get home. It's the one thing we all wish for in the regiment.

IX

Monica wrote a paper all about her garden in June in the "Londoner," and sent it to the Editor. He printed it, and told her afterwards she might add it to her letters.

AFTER the raindrops, sunshine; in the midst of the storm a rainbow. The jewelled arc is spanned across the garden, drawing sky and earth together. All the flowers are sobbing, but soon, as the sunbeams shine out for joy, they will lift their heads refreshed by the shower, and the buds will open to the light. Oaks still don their square-cut yellow-green robes, and they shine against the indigo firs as only oak-leaves can. The hawthorn hedges are laden as if with snow, hardly a green twig is visible, for this year there is so much more blossom than usual, branches being simply beaten down with bloom, and they grow tired of their burden ere the petals drop. At last the longed-for moment has come when I can rest in a low

From the Heart of the Rose

wicker-chair under the mespilus trees, and realise the wonderful presence of summer. Overhead the turtle-dove purrs out her gladness with renewed vigour, and the sweet sound blends with the soft fall of the river over the weir as it hurries on to the great sea. The dove came over that sea, and perhaps, as she sits on her untidy nest on the Austrian pine, she wonders to herself why the river is rushing on eager to be swallowed up in the vast ocean. Lazily looking across the shining lawn at the house, we see a wall covered with early roses. The dear, time-honoured old Gloire de Dijon peeping in at the upper windows, masses of pink china roses, crimson Longworth ramblers intertwined with trusses of Rêve d'Or. Two thrushes have built in the roses on the wall, "all among the roses, love," under the shadow of yellow jasmine; and a fly-catcher has made his home on the trellis, while a chaffinch—foolish, trusting bird—has built his nest just by the doorway, and every time any one enters the mother-bird flies off in a fright, and she is rapidly getting worn to a shadow by constant movement. Her mate chose the spot, but never again will she leave the choice to him. She cannot desert her eggs, but the anxiety is almost more than she can bear. In the ivy a wagtail builds

From the Heart of the Rose

in peace, and as long as a cuckoo does not catch a glimpse of the nest she is safe. But cuckoos are all round the garden, bubbling away to one another. Many folks do not understand the cuckoo's different notes, and even, in their ignorance, think he can only say "cuck-oo." A big tit has a nest in a box on my lady's window-sill, and the nest is lined with orange and blue fluff off the drawing-room carpet—a sequel to spring cleaning! Backwards and forwards journey the parent birds with their beaks full of green caterpillars for their large and hungry family. In one corner of the house there is a wilderness of orange and yellow Welsh poppies, and they come up year after year between the stones by the steps, and in every crevice and cranny available. If they once take root they make their home and never leave again, but they are "kittle cattle" till they settle down. In my lady's border Eastern poppies reign supreme, turning great scarlet petals sunwards; white and blue lupins stand sentinel on either side. Sweet rockets, violas, peonies, and tall groups of aquilegias are there. It is somewhat of a wilderness, and the Spanish iris grumbles at being a little overgrown by the cornflowers which have chosen of their own sweet will to come up everywhere.

From the Heart of the Rose

Banks of rhododendrons are now a mass of bloom, and azaleas make the evening sweet on one side, while the scent of the giant syringa is wafted all across the garden as a soft west wind bids sprays of yellow laburnum jostle the lilac boughs. When rhododendrons are out a garden must be fair, for the trusses of white, and red, and mauve add so much colour to the picture, and such a real mass of colour relieves the eternal green. Kalmias are nearly in bloom, soft waxen pink flowers which can be seen, too, at a little distance. This is the perfect season for the rock garden, when blue veronicas mix with rock roses, pink, yellow, orange, and the deep blue of the dear *fleur de frontier* replaces the blue of the gentian which is past. Here and there crimson lychnis on slender stalks shine against the time-worn ironstone of the country, and the pink oxalis flowers next the double white campion, and wonders to itself why it is happy out of the greenhouse. A tangle of periwinkles and scarlet honeysuckle make a soft combination of colour which appeals to the heart of an artist passing on his way through the rosary. A poet would understand it all, too, without any waste of words. Under the Spanish chestnuts all the ferns are fresh and green; they are not tired out yet,

From the Heart of the Rose

for some of the fronds are hardly unfurled. Nature is still young and hearty ; nature is still bright and gay. Outside the paling is my lady's wild garden, where brambles grow in artistic sprays, and golden broom and gorse form a glory all their own. Patches of red sorrel colour the land, and pink mayas brighten the middle distance. Beds of spireas seem to flourish in the sandy, stony soil, and yellow briar roses are covered with bursting buds. Wild flowers and garden flowers grow side by side here, my lady allows no murmur of caste in her wild garden ; if a flower does not wish to grow it must e'en die, it will not be pampered into life again. Trees have been planted for shade and shelter, for on the brow of the hill you can watch the sunset, and sit and dream that the world is fair. All the shrubs peep over the trellised paling and long to live freely out in the open, and birds fly hither and thither, for is not this a sanctuary for them ? A whitethroat flies over the broom to tell a meadow-pipit in the wild garden that it is quite safe to build in the shrubs round the rosary, and a chiff-chaff, strange to say, has built quite high up in a tall cyprus near the front door. The June of life is a fair month ; anxieties of spring are over, the weariness of summer has not come, and winter is out of sight.

X

A letter is found in the post-bag from Mrs. Ritchie. Monica is filled with delight. "William Makepeace Thackeray" is a name to inspire. To know how he wrote and when, to be in touch with his memory through his daughter, to hear that, some day, she might gaze on his actual MS., made even the sun shine on a raining day in June.

June 2, pres FONTAINEBLEAU.

DEAR MRS. MONICA, — Your letter has followed me to this little place by the river, where I have been staying for a few days. We came here from Paris, which was delightful and full of interest, but which seemed to be on fire. This, on the contrary, is very silent and refreshing. The fishes leap from the waters, the birds are still in full song, a few holiday-makers disport themselves on the little terrace in front of the hotel, where grow the pretty old cropped lime-trees, and the green

From the Heart of the Rose

chairs and tables. Just across the road the great forest of Fontainebleau begins its wonders, and the rocks and the beautiful beeches work their enchantments, as do the changing lights of the beautiful panorama which one sees from the higher levels. All this carries me oddly back to my childhood, when with our grandparents we used to come sometimes to little country inns such as this one, and to which my father sometimes followed us. I cannot quite answer your question about him and his manner of writing, for he was in so many different ways of being and feeling that his habits and hours varied. He was always careful, his manuscript was always orderly. His writing was never casual, but always *intended*. I can never remember seeing him writing out of doors, or scribbling hasty notes upon scraps of paper. What I think I must have told you, was that I remember hearing him say that he used to wonder, when he looked at the sheet of blank paper, how it was to get filled, and where it all was to come from, and yet that he knew that in due time the writing would be there before him. It may have come easily in early days, but it was not so in later times. He used to say that holding his pen seemed to cause his ideas to flow; but

From the Heart of the Rose

I think I have said something like this in my prefaces already. He wrote a great deal in the early morning. He had a chair, across which he placed his desk. He did not like writing at night, unless he was obliged by circumstances. He used to like the hours just before dinner, and in winter time I have often seen him working by the light of a little bronze candlestick with double lights, which he kept in his study, and which he used to put before him. I hope, if ever you can come and see me at home, I might show you some of his MSS. When I look at it, it always seems to me like looking at a sort of picture of him, more like than are many of the pictures!

I have not at all forgotten our meeting, and I hope we may come together again.

I am, sincerely yours,

ANNE RITCHIE.

XI

*To a lover of Selborne and all that belongs
to Gilbert White, with copies of letters
enclosed.*

ASHOWN me his bound copy of White's Selborne yesterday. He has several autograph letters of Gilbert White's. I have copied two of them for you. I do not know if the first has ever been published, the second is in Professor Bell's edition, but evidently has been carelessly copied. As both of the original letters belong to my family, I feel I have a right to them. Gilbert White's handwriting is beautiful, and it interested me very much to find him discoursing on poetry. I foolishly thought that he had but few ideas beyond birds and beasts, but that betrays my ignorance. You remember going to Hind-head with me, do you not?

“SELBORNE, *Jan. 1st, 1791.*

“DEAR SIR,—As the year 1790 is just at an end, I send you the rain of that period,

From the Heart of the Rose

which, I trust, has been regularly measured. Nov. and Dec., as you see, were very wet, with many storms that in various places had occasioned much damage. The fall of rain from Nov. 19 to the 22 inclusive was prodigious! The thunder-storm on Dec. 23 in the morning before day was very awful; but I thank God it did not do us any the least harm. Two millers, in a wind-mill on the Sussex downs near Goodwood, were struck dead by lightning that morning; and part of the gibbet on Hind-head, on which two murderers were suspended, was beaten down. I am not sure that I was awaked soon enough to hear the whole storm; between the flashes that I saw and the thunder, I counted from 16 to 14 seconds.

“In consequence of my Nat. Hist. I continue to receive various letters from various parts, and in particular from a Mr. Marsham of Stratton near Norwich, an aged gent: who has published in the R. S. respecting the growth of trees. Do you know anything about this person? He is an agreeable correspondent. He is such an admirer of oaks, that he has been twice to see the great oak in the Holt.

“Dr. Chandler, and family, who came at first only with an intent to stay with us a

From the Heart of the Rose

few months, have now taken the vicarage house for some time. The Dr. is much busied in writing the life of his founder, William Wainflete: he lives a very studious and domestic life, keeps no horse, and visits few people. . . . Mr. Chaerton, who is keeping his Xmass with us as usual, desires his best respects, and many thanks for the hospitable reception, and intelligent information which he met with last summer at Lyndon. He is a great antiquary, and much employed in writing the life of Doctor Will. Smith, the founder of Brazen-nose Coll., of which he is now the Senior fellow.

“Your leg, we hope, is recovered from its accident.

“Mrs. G. White joins in affectionate compliments, and the good wishes of the season. I conclude, Yr. most humble servt.,

“G. WHITE.”

This letter is addressed to Thomas Barker, Esq., of Lyndon Hall, Rutland, and has a big black seal. Of course the paper is yellow with age, and as I reverently touched the page I seemed to be standing again in the old churchyard at Selborne, by the time-worn stone almost hidden by grass and wild flowers, with its simple inscription—“G. W.,

From the Heart of the Rose

26 June 1793." He was seventy-three years old when he died. I must take you to see Selborne when you come to us. Here is the second letter I copied, on the making of poetry :—

“SELBORNE : *Nov*: 3 ; 1774.

“DEAR SIR,—When I sat down to write to you in verse, my whole design was to show you at once how easy a thing it might be with a little care for a Nephew to excel his Uncle in the business of versification : but as you have fully answered that intent by your late excellent lines ; you must for the future excuse my replying in the same way, and make some allowance for the difference of our ages.

“However, when at any time you find your muse propitious, I shall always rejoice to see a copy of your performance ; and shall be ready to commend ; and what is more rare, yet more sincere, even to object and criticise where there is occasion.

“A little turn for English poetry is no doubt a pretty accomplishment for a young gent: and will not only enable him the better to read and relish our best poets ; but will, like dancing to the body, have an happy influence even on his prose compositions. Our best poets have been our best prose writers :

From the Heart of the Rose

of this assertion Dryden and Pope are notorious instances. It would be vain to think of saying much here on the art of versification: instead of the narrow limits of the letter, such a subject would require a large volume. However, I may say in few words, that the way to excel is to copy only from our best writers. The great grace of poetry consists in a perpetual variation of your *cadensies*: if possible no two lines following ought to have their pause at the same foot. Another beauty should not be passed over, and that is the use of throwing the sense and pause into the third line, which adds a dignity and freedom to your expressions. Dryden introduced this practice, and carried it to great perfection; but his successor Pope, by his own exactness, corrected away that noble liberty, and almost reduced every sentence within the narrow bounds of a couplet. Alliteration, or the art of introducing words beginning with the same letter in the same or following line, has also a fine effect when managed with discretion. Dryden and Pope practised this art with wonderful success. As for example, where you say 'The polished beetle,' the epithet 'burnished' would be better for the reason above. But then you must avoid affectation in this case, and let the alliteration slide in, as it were,

From the Heart of the Rose

without design: and this secret will make your lines appear bold and nervous.

“There are also in poetry allusions, similes, and a thousand nameless graces, the efficacy of which nothing can make you sensible of but the careful reading of our best poets, and a nice and judicious application of their beauties. I need not add that you should be careful to seem not to take any pains about your rhymes; they should fall in as if they were of themselves. Our old poets laboured as much formerly to lug in two rhyming words as a butcher does to drag an ox to be slaughtered; but Mr. Pope has set such a pattern of care in that way that few composers now are faulty in the business of rhyming. When I have the pleasure of meeting you we will talk over these and many other matters too copious for an epistle. I had like to have forgotten to add that Jack copied your verses and sent them to your Uncle John, who commended them much; you will be pleased to be commended by one that is the best performer and the best critic in that way that I know. With respects to your father and mother and all the family, I remain, yr. affect: Uncle,

“GIL: WHITE.”

I wonder why an uncle should begin a

From the Heart of the Rose

letter to a nephew "Dear Sir"? We are not so punctilious in these days. The letters I receive from my nephews are anything but orthodox. Would Gilbert White's nephews call him "an old brick," I wonder? I am sure these letters will interest you.

MONICA.

XII

There was only one letter in the post-bag, and when Monica saw the handwriting she looked grave, but after reading the contents she smiled; she really could not be stern any longer.

DEAR MONICA,—I am on my knees,
may I get up?—Yours ever,
C.

XIII

On the subject of a visitors' book.

I AM sending you the verses you read in my visitors' book. I think I told you Constance wrote them. They are so very pretty.

“Across the threshold of a dying year
Stretch forth, old friends, in peace your kindly hands ;
Or if you pass away to other lands,
Let fly your harmless shafts of memory here.
Familiar voice and presence hovers near,
As every page its record brief receives,
Like perfume lingering in the rustling leaves
Of bygone roses, sweet, though dried and sere,
Kind words and deeds are garnered in the heart,
A treasure that no thievish years can steal ;
Though seas and continents world-wide may part,
And Time, still stepping onward, turns each wheel.
Fast comes another year on pinions fleet,
Fresh finger-prints to leave on empty sheet.”

Here are the lines also another visitor wrote for 1895, the year the ‘heir of all the ages,’ namely, Dick, was born. I have

From the Heart of the Rose

not copied them into the book for fear the closing sentiment might offend somebody!

“So ends 1895.
Strange to say we’re all alive,
And even one more
Than in ’94.
Of the names on our list
Some we missed
When they went,
And we thought how the days had
been spent.
Others?—well,—we just fed them,
Showed them the country and sped
them.”

Don't you think that is rather nice? After all a visitors' book is rather a *sad* possession. You turn the pages carelessly and read names of loved ones who can never come here again. It is good to think Where they have gone there will be no need of a visitors' book, because there will be no more good-byes, no partings. At first I tried to get folks to write a verse in my book, and the first quotation is the time-worn line, "God made the country and man made the town." I thank William Cowper for that kindly thought. Cowley wrote, "God the first garden made, and the first city Cain," and Bacon, "God Almighty first planted a garden," so all great men are agreed. It reads—as I have written it—

From the Heart of the Rose

as if these people stayed with us! The quotations soon fell off, and I do not grieve over the fact, for so few people write anything original. MONICA.

P.S.—Do come again soon. Our door is always *wide open*.

XIV

*To a lover of Mr. G. F. Watts' pictures,
with photograph enclosed. (See frontis-
piece.)*

I HAVE been over to Limnerslease, and have seen Mr. Watts again. I always feel as if I climb on to a higher plane when I have been there. The atmosphere is clearer, and the grand personality of our prophet artist seems to envelop one and inspire one to try and really *do* something. "*Do noble deeds, not dream them all day long.*" Mr. Watts is not great in stature, but as you stand talking with him you feel at once you are standing in the presence of a great master-mind. He has a very keen eye, and the kindest smile I have ever seen. I think what strikes me most is his wonderful simplicity, and I might almost venture to say humility. But then all really great men are humble. We stood by the sundial in the little square garden by the barn wherein the huge statue of Tennyson is being modelled

From the Heart of the Rose

for Lincoln, and the artist pointed out the motto to me. "It is my own motto," he said, "and is better than any picture I ever painted, and will do more good." I read the words,

"The utmost for the highest,"

and I felt at once that his pictures are the realisation of that splendid thought.

I generally talk to him about birds; it is a subject we have in common. He loves birds even more than flowers, and he leads the crusade against the slaughter of beautiful birds for the adornment of ladies' hats and heads. He simply cannot understand how a woman—worthy of the name—can wear a dear dead thing in her hat, such as a humming bird or other pretty foreign bird. Ostrich feathers, of course, can be allowed, or even pheasants' feathers, but that is all. You know his "Bird Angel" picture. An angel is bending over the altar of fashion where beautiful birds lie tortured and dead. Her hands are clasped tightly in an agony of pain over her eyes. She cannot bear to look at so much suffering. It is hard to believe that a woman's whim could be so cruel and so wanton. If the women of England joined hand in hand, the leaders of fashion, the beauties, the great ladies of the land, and

From the Heart of the Rose

would give up all aigrettes and wings and small birds' feathers, then our womanhood would not be sullied, and Mr. Watts' message would reach all hearts, and the "Bird Angel" would be able to take her hands from before her face. I should dread to see the look of pain now on her face and watch her tears, but oh! how I should *love* to see her smile.

On the longest day of the year (last week), Mr. Watts felt he must make the most of the light, and so got up to paint soon after three in the morning and painted till dark, with only a few minutes' rest now and again. And this at eighty-three years old! He feels that every artist has a message to give to the world. His whole life has been given up to raise the tone of English art. No artist has ever taught so much as Mr. Watts has done. "Love and Life" has helped so many up the steep incline of the King's Highway. Love, so tender and yet so strong. Love, leading ever upwards. "Hope" has spoken to thousands whose courage failed them. They had not before realised the tune on the one string. "Death Crowning Innocence" has taken away all fear of death, so infinitely tender and kind and protecting is the figure bending over the little baby child. If I begin to write to you of his pictures I feel I cannot stop, because

From the Heart of the Rose

they are so inspiring. I am devoted to "Good luck to your fishing." The little child playing with the fisherman's line seems actually to rise and fall on the wave as you gaze at the painting. In the studio at Limnerslease the great picture of "The Court of Death" is being painted. Here, again, Death is kind. Some are glad to lay down their lives, and some are afraid. Every type of man is there pictured—soldier and slave, king and scholar, man and maid. In the arms of Death there is a little child, token of the better world to come. "Ye shall be born again." Some time ago, when we were talking of how little we could individually do in the world to "right the wrong," and I was saying what infinite good he had been able to do, Mr. Watts reminded me of the story of the raindrop grieving as it fell into the sea at doing no good in the world; "but it fell into an oyster-shell and was turned into a pearl." I shall never forget the kindness of his smile as he told me the story. Some think the most perfect of all his pictures is "Love and Death." The great veiled figure making its way into the house of Life; Love passionately and, one feels, so hopelessly, barring the way. But you know all these pictures better than I do, yet I feel infinitely richer, for I knew

From the Heart of the Rose

the man. I can see him now, with his long light coat, little red velvet skull-cap, dainty frills, at work at some great picture ; but palette and brushes are readily laid aside to give a kindly greeting to a friend. He little dreams how far his shadow reaches, but perhaps he knows the world is a better world for his teaching.

Limnerslease is an ideal home for the great master, nestling among the pines in the fairest corner of Surrey.

In the new graveyard belonging to Compton Mrs. Watts has built a little chapel, but I cannot describe that to you now. Come and stay with me and I will take you over to see it. All the terra-cotta work in the walls has been modelled by members of her own modelling school. She has started an industry of her own, here and in Scotland. All the patterns are hers, and the work done is exceedingly good. Mr. Watts believes that the only cure for drunkenness in our villages is interesting employment. If properly trained and taught, the coming generation will make their own patterns, and the load of misery will be lifted from many.

I fear I have failed to carry you into the atmosphere of the artist's home, where I would fain have you follow me, for it is so

From the Heart of the Rose

splendid to stand in the actual presence of *the best*. When life looks small, when you are tempted to give your "second best," when you lose heart and think the work is not worth doing, then remember the words of the motto—"The utmost for the highest"—and instantly you will feel that your very life is too small a gift to give.

MONICA.

XV

In the glad June time to one in London.

HOW I wish you were here instead of being shut up in musty, fusty London. You will expect news straight from the heart of the rose this month, but you will not get it. My roses are still in bud in the rosary, and besides, let me remind you that all garden books will tell you about roses. The other day I was told of a tree near Black Lake from which some young birds were making a curious noise. Of course we were at once much excited, and rushed off to investigate. There is a cart-track through the bracken which leads to Black Lake, as you know, and we were walking along this when Dick shouted out, "Oh, look at that rabbit!" I looked, and there I saw a half-grown bunny charging at us at express speed. I expected every moment that he would catch sight of us and turn off into the fern, one side or the other, but no, on he came, and eventu-

From the Heart of the Rose

ally passed so close to us that he actually brushed against the child's foot. We were wondering what on earth could make a rabbit behave in so odd a manner, when we saw coming towards us along the cart-track, and following the footsteps of the rabbit, a large stoat. Evidently the rabbit had been so terrified at being hunted by his enemy that he had no eyes or thoughts for anything but what was behind him. The stoat, of course, turned off when he saw us into the bracken, and I hope we were thus the means of saving poor bunny at least for a time. We soon found the old birch-tree close to the path, in which were two holes about ten feet from the ground. They were too small to admit my hand, but I could just feel that they went in for about an inch, and then downwards. The holes did not seem to be connected with one another. I lay down under the bracken, flattering myself I was completely hidden, and watched eagerly. Very soon I heard a loud angry "Jick, jick!" from a tree overhead, and another "Jick, jick!" from the mother-bird close by. They were a pair of great black and white woodpeckers. I kept very still, and soon one of them flew down and clung to the bark near the hole, and I saw the bird beautifully. Its crimson head was

From the Heart of the Rose

brilliant, and its tail a little outspread. "Jick, jick! Jick, jick!" cried his mate, and the nestlings literally screamed for food. I was almost afraid to breathe, but I might just as well have been lying comfortably against a tree in the open, and not suffering under the fern, for the birds never took their eyes off me. They peeped at me round the trunks of all the trees, and when one grew a trifle over bold, the other gave a warning cry at once. They utterly refused to enter the hole, and tried over and over again to take my attention off by flying on to a bough of an old oak near by and tapping for insects. Their babies cried in vain, for their parents were deaf to all entreaties. Now and then they flew quite away, only to return calling angrily, as they found I was still watching their hole. I wish you had been there. At last I gave up my vigil and wandered on. The moment I was out of sight I heard both woodpeckers give a joyful, triumphant "Jick, jick!" and I knew they both flew into the hole at once. I found, by the lake, a baby heron still in its nest, swaying to and fro on a slender topmost branch of a fir. The old herons did not in the least mind my being there, and brought dainty morsels several times from the water while I sat

From the Heart of the Rose

at the foot of the tree. I suppose a heron's nature is grander than a woodpecker's, and scorns fear.

Richard Cæsar brought us over a very fine specimen of an adder caught on the farm. It is supposed to have come in some bavins from Whit Mead. It was nearly two feet long, rather a thickset specimen, the dark zig-zag down its back well marked. Long after it was supposed to be dead we noticed it coil and uncoil as we examined its fangs. Poor adder! I don't believe it would have hurt any one if it had been allowed to live. Outside the garden a field of white clover mixed with red poppies is a joy for ever, shut your eyes and picture it. The sun is shining on it and the sky is a deep deep blue. Larks are singing overhead, singing as if their little hearts would burst with joy. A lapwing dipping across the field cries "Pee-wit—wit-wit! Pee-wit—wit-wit!" and a yellowhammer in the hedge among wild roses and honeysuckle calls for "a little bit of bread and *no* cheese"; if you listen you will also hear the tender humming of bees in the clover. June is a very perfect month.

MONICA.

XVI

*To a friend who begs Monica to belong to
two new societies.*

I REALLY belong to so many societies and unions that I fear I must decline to join any more. My patience is on the wane. The "Linen Rag Society" and "The Doorstep Mission" are of course admirable, but beyond my sphere. If you ever ask me to subscribe to a Home for overworked mothers, I will gladly contribute my mite. I suppose the reason why such a Home is never started is because homes (with a little "h") could not get on without their mainspring.

MONICA.

XVII

To a girl who longs to publish a book.

OF course if you must, you must. If you feel you have anything to write, write it. But I tremble for you beforehand. One has to suffer so much pain over one's books, for you can only write with your heart's blood, then rough criticism or thoughtless humour wounds terribly. The only chance of peace is to make up your mind not to care, and that is easier said than done. Of course there is no joy which can compare with the sight of first proofs. It seems so splendid to have anything one has ever written in print; then follows the hopelessness, the knowledge that one can never write a word worth reading; and at last faith in the hope that He who gives the power of writing will give the thoughts too. Mrs. Bishop (author of the "Prison Life of Marie Antoinette") once said to me in her sweet, gentle voice, "*You* are on the side of the angels." It

From the Heart of the Rose

made me feel utterly humble, but I have never forgotten it, and I use her words as a test to all I write. You know, I feel very strongly on the subject of women writing. We ought all to be "on the side of the angels." Men can write what they like, I do not judge them for a moment. A very well-known authoress said to me once at the Women Writers' Dinner, "Why should we dig in the dustbin for plots?" Careless words fade from memory, but what we write is down in black and white for all time. We can never tell how far our shadow may reach. I sometimes wonder if we all realise the universal power of the pen? It is a woman's work to "stand in the light reflecting the light," and we cannot do this by writing of sin and impurity. If it is "a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret," it must be a still greater shame to write of them. I know every one will not agree with me. I had a long controversy with one authoress on the subject of one of her heroines. I maintained that if we want to aim high we must keep a perfect ideal before our eyes. She said we learn more by looking in a looking-glass than by gazing at a star. Perhaps it is lucky that we all see things from different points of view. My advice

From the Heart of the Rose

will ever be that we women must think, and we must pray, before we put pen to paper. Please do not think I want to preach, I only want to warn you. God never wants us to pull a long face and hide our brightness, He wants us to be *splendid*, He wants us to *do our best*. By all means send me your MS., I feel sure it will be worth reading. I hope you have had it typed, for my leisure hours are few. I will give you a present of the advice dear old Mr. George Bentley (the publisher) gave me when I asked him about the publication of my first book, "Boy." "You must not be discouraged, you must *win* success, and make the Fates yield to you, not you to them."

MONICA.

XVIII

*A river walk with a companion who knew all
about birds and flowers.*

IS there anything in the heart of the country that one more thoroughly enjoys than a complete change of scene? Not that one is tired of the old nature, but a little of a new nature comes as a blessing to all of us.

Up on the top of the hill, a hundred feet above the river, the uninteresting plantation of pines wrestling with each other and striving to get a breath of air above each other's heads, the hot dry soil covered with heather, the white sand which one kicks up as one stumbles down the narrow zigzag path to the foot of the hill—all breathe heat, heat, heat. What a comfort to get to the bottom to a little grove of young oaks, their green still fresh, hardly as yet losing the auburn tint of the young foliage. Then good-bye for an hour or so to the dry hot heather, and with a

From the Heart of the Rose

plunge through a gap in the hedge we are in a water-meadow, where the grass (if grass it can be called—really more weeds than grass) is already nearly a couple of feet high. Oh, the green of it!

We find a track which we follow, and soon come upon a river, perhaps only twenty feet across, and moving, as rivers through water-meads generally do move, rather sluggishly. Here, by an old boat-house, we stop a while and look round. Opposite to us on the other side of the river is a small flock of well-bred black calves, who seem to enjoy the cool grass as much as we do, though naturally where they are the meadow has not been put up for hay, and the grass would be short were it not that in such a damp place grass is bound to grow quickly, however fast it may be eaten down. Beyond the calves a small clump of bright green oaks, one of which has a dead stag-horn head, and away and away beyond the oaks comes the sound of the evening church bells of the neighbouring village. Quietly a snipe rises from the meadow and takes a wide sweep in the air; then, as we watch it, suddenly begins to descend for a few yards, and while it does so we hear that ever curious drumming which the bird makes

From the Heart of the Rose

with its wings as it falls through the air. Drumming it may be called, but to our mind it much more resembles the bleat of a lamb or a goat. This sound only lasts a few seconds and then the vibrating wings cease, and with another long swing the bird flies to another point of the sky, and again the bleating is heard, as again with vibrating wings it lowers itself down once more. Another bird rises and performs the same evolution, and yet another. Then tired by their flight, the birds drop either into the marshy grass from which we saw them rise, or settle quietly on the dead branch of the old oak opposite.

When steadying themselves to perch on the tree, the birds always descended with their wings held high in the air, so that the sides of the body and the inner part of the wings were visible; then just as it neared the branch the wings would be shot stiffly out, the long legs lowered, and the snipe settled quietly down on the branch. I daresay there are many people who think that a snipe never perches. Well, if they still doubt this fact, let them come and see for themselves.

While perched in this way, the birds often utter a rather hard note of two syllables, quite distinct from the note of alarm that

From the Heart of the Rose

the bird makes when we put him up in the shooting season—a chirp it might almost be called; but though I have watched them for hours, I have never heard this note uttered except when they were perched on the dead oak-tree. After a good deal of chatter and chirping the snipe will again rise, and again the curious drumming is heard; sometimes the birds will come in their flight quite close to where we stood, though always at a good height in the air.

A little splash, a swirl in the water, and there is a fly the less in the world at large, but one more inside a big trout who we just catch sight of as he turns back to his hiding-place under the bank, and a lovely blue dragon-fly darts past us down the stream and settles for a moment on a piece of floating weed.

We turn to walk along the edge of the river, and the noise we make sets a sedge-warbler chattering and scolding with unceasing vigour, as if all the place belonged to him and no one else had a right to be there; and then from a thorn-bush close at hand the common whitethroat joins in the hubbub with his aggressive and rather harsh song, which seems to come out of his little body in great jerks. As we walk through giant nettles that force us to hold our hands high

From the Heart of the Rose

to avoid their sting, now squelching through high grasses, we hear a rustle at our feet, then a splash in the water, and standing still to see what we can see, we watch the middle of the stream and soon up comes the head of a water rat making all the haste he can to get to the other side. The pause has given us time to listen to a not very familiar note, a song (for it is a song) of only two notes and a short shake which we know by the name of the reed-bunting or black-headed bunting. He is not very close to us but farther down stream, so we move down the bank as quietly as we can to try and get a glimpse of him; but a glimpse of a black head and a white collar is all we get as the bird flies quickly down the river and is soon out of sight.

Stopping now to listen to the snipe, now to admire the beauty of a kingfisher as he flashed up and down the stream, we wander on its banks until we find ourselves on the outskirts of a young plantation of birch, strongly scenting the air with their peculiar aromatic smell, and pushing our way through the young growth, we reach at length a part of the oak copse we had before been through. Good-bye to the river and to its birds, beasts, and insects. Here we are again in the home of the more ordinary birds of

From the Heart of the Rose

the heart of the country, the blackbird, thrush, chaffinch, and the merry willow-wren, all singing at their best. Good-bye, too, to the fresh green grass and the "sludgy, squalid creek." We climb the white zigzag path up the hill, over the dry crackling heather, through the hot close pines, on to the dusty road, and home.

P.S.—On a second visit to the snipe-bog a week later we found the whole place pink with ragged robin. The reed-bunting was again seen, but this time had its bill full of feathers, evidently going to build. We took a little path through the long grass which cut off a promontory where the river turned, and which was made either by rats or water-hens, or both.

There is not much dead wood at the top of the oak-tree where the snipe settle, but a short thick dead branch. We noticed that the snipe, when they settle on this piece of dead wood, always do so with their heads inwards, that is, they do not perch on the branch and look across it as other birds would do, but on every occasion they perch at the end and face inwards. This, I think, is a peculiarity worth noticing. The white-throat was feeding its young, so must breed

From the Heart of the Rose

earlier than the reed-bunting, or to be more correct, the reed-bunting breeds later than other birds, unless this was its second nest. I forget whether it breeds twice in the year or not; I think not.

XIX

On many subjects, with letters enclosed.

I AM sending you a batch of letters I had this morning. I suppose every one gets the odd mixture I get ; it is quite a pot-pourri of letters sometimes. I never can see why, for instance, because I write books, I am supposed to keep a registry for servants. Unluckily I abused sparrows in one book, so I have called forth the wrath of half London, and provided food for many reviewers. "What would our pale-faced slum children know of birds," writes one, "but for the sparrow's cheerful chirp and brisk little person? His little heart has not forgotten Paradise, but when man his friend was banished he braved for him the gloom of towns to show him wings might still be his, and his flight though wavering be heavenwards. Come to our parks, and you will see how the little one whom you despise is cherished ; you will see baby hands throwing him crumbs, you will see

From the Heart of the Rose

tired men and women, who have crept from some back street to rest themselves awhile, feeding him, from perhaps a scanty store ; and you will see him, with a happy confidence and a loving heart, stuffing the precious crumbs down his youngster's throat with as much affection as your sweetest singer. In our back streets, where he can hardly find a twig to build his nest with, he clings to us still. Grimy he may be, sooty he may be, a puddle must serve him for a bath, but brave and courageous he is always. We love our plucky little friend who is with us through thick and thin, so I pray you when you write again do not belittle the only bird who lives with us town-dwellers, whether we be rich or poor. . . ."

After this, alas ! I can never have the consolation of abusing sparrows again, but I have learnt something. I never knew before that sparrows made their nests of twigs in London. They *are* so tiresome in the country. They will build in my bird-boxes, and frighten all my other beautiful bird friends away. I do not grudge them to the "town-dwellers," but in spite of all I cannot promise them sanctuary in my garden. We have just been reading a charming book, "My Birds in Freedom and Captivity," by H. D. Astley. In it the author makes this observation, "I

From the Heart of the Rose

wish all sparrows were hoopoes." I echo that wish. But where — oh! where — would such a possibility end? "I wish all relations were friends." "I wish all thorns were flowers." "I wish all friends' notes were banknotes." "I wish all darkness was light." "I wish all prose was poetry." (Others would reverse that wish.) But I suppose my correspondent would be quite vexed if her sparrows were hoopoes! Then again I *truthfully* described our own doves. This assertion bore even better fruit. It drew forth letters in a very well-known weekly paper. Oh! such letters! bristling with——I was going to say "un-truth," but that might sound rude. You cannot in your wildest dreams conceive the impossible things these published doves did. One made little graves of coloured feathers on the top of a piano day after day for a dead mate. One mourned among the ashes in the grate, and then slowly died of a broken heart, and one utterly refused to marry again, and shut her eyes whenever such an idea was even suggested; it hurt her loving heart so much. I am glad to say the author of "Concerning Teddy" writes to me more truthfully. "I had a dove for twenty-six years," she says, "and he was so cruel that after he had killed two

From the Heart of the Rose

mates I dare not trust him with another ; therefore he lived alone quite happy, and unable to injure any one else, save a cat, who “ plucked ” him through the bars of his cage, but was routed by him and almost blinded. He died full of days and of evil temper and cantankerousness ! ” I love getting letters from unseen friends, and am proud to say I have many now. People always appreciate one so much more at a distance, and before they know one ! “ It is always *so* disappointing to meet people who write books, you know,” a lady said to me one day, and of course I agreed with her. “ Will you write and tell me how to make a garden ? ” writes an unknown correspondent. She said no more. What could I answer ? Then comes a dear letter from an eight-year-old child in America saying how “ *dlited* ” she was with a book she had read about children. “ It helped me to get well,” she adds. “ When we finished it, I said, read it all over again.” I wish I had kept all the letters for you, but I must have a “ rummage ” and find you some.

MONICA.

XX

From Newnham College.

DEAR MONICA,—I hear that you, in your garden, offer counsel to minds in perplexity about gardens and the like matters. The only gardens in my control are window-boxes. Window-boxes are more satisfactory in one way than either a real garden or vases of flowers in a room, since they give pleasure both to the tenant of the room and to persons outside. Yet here, as in all life, there seems to be the need of a comparison between what is pleasant to oneself—sitting in the room—and what shows well to those outside, who look up to my first-floor window. If, as seems probable, you know all about window-boxes, possibly you have a solution for this problem. The common answer: “Please yourself, and what you choose will please others,” does not hold when the points of issue are so different as those of the mistress, sitting at her desk, and her friends walking in the

From the Heart of the Rose

paths below ; which things are an allegory, if you like to make them into one.

To return to window-boxes. It seems a heartless and expensive measure to put them into the hands of a nurseryman to keep stocked. But for an *ignoramus que faire?* One likes to think of the plants about one as friends rather than as pieces of furniture, living friends—wherefore I never love cut flowers.—With all good wishes for your garden, I am, yours sincerely, LEGULA.

XXI

From Dr. Harry Roberts, author of "The Chronicle of a Cornish Garden." Monica read the enclosures with keen interest. She positively revelled in garden books.

*The Book of the Green-house,
The Book of Old-fashioned Flowers,
The Book of Asparagus,
The Book of the Grape,*

were all on the list. The editor says in his note that "Lack of enterprise and lack of knowledge are the great facts to be overcome." . . . In life? or in gardening? Well, the two are much alike. Spring, summer, autumn, winter, come to all of us. We bear fruit, some thirty, some forty, and a very few a hundred fold. We need a deal of pruning, and those who are pruned hardest bear the best blossoms. We cannot do without sunshine—and we never grow without—showers.

DEAR MONICA,—I am sending you an illegible MS. to test your eyes with. 'Tis a prospectus of a series of practical books on gardening, which I'm sure you'll

From the Heart of the Rose

agree is a desirable series to produce. You'll observe that that "note" begins with the words "Merrie England," and it is wonderful what a battle-cry that is to me at least. I don't think we've hit off that ideal state yet, nor do I think that merely growing Asparagus and Bulbs will bring it about, but I do believe that one of the greatest factors will be the movement of people with the cosmopolitan spirit which is bred in great cities, moving out into the country and helping to break down its silly barriers of caste, and to reduce its stupid little idle etiquette to the ridicule it deserves. Before an advance on the dull old times was possible it was essential that the country folk passed through the city for a generation or so, but the time has now come for them to leave the town again and return to their mothers once more. *Do tell me what you think of these things*, and of the idea of the books I am arranging.—Yours sincerely,

HARRY ROBERTS.

[Monica wishes to bring all the trades back to the country. Why must we go to the towns for everything? she says. Every village ought to have its little shop, its shoemaker, carpenter, paper-hanger, blacksmith, and, if possible, its builder.

From the Heart of the Rose

Cannot the great cities supply this want, provided cottages can be had? In many villages cottages stand empty, while in others I must own overcrowding necessitates a move somewhere.]

XXII

From a friend staying in Devonshire, who sees everything and everybody through rose-coloured glasses.

MY DEAR MONICA,—I have been tri-cycling during the last few weeks through some of the most beautiful parts of the south-west of England, often stopping on my way to talk to the country people. Their kindness and readiness to help one in every possible way was quite delightful, but one was puzzled by their want of appreciation of the beauty by which they were surrounded. At two especially lovely places, one a rock-bound Cornish cove, and the other a beautiful fishing village, I was told, "Yes, people who come here say it is beautiful, but *we* don't see much in it." It seemed such a contrast to the feeling of some of the north-country people one has met, especially in the large towns. I remember driving once with a party of working people over the Derbyshire moors,

From the Heart of the Rose

and being much struck by their real *reverence* for what they saw. "We ought to take off our hats here," one man said; another person, also from a northern town, whom we took a short time ago to see the Branksome pine-woods near Bournemouth, said "she thanked God that He had allowed her to live to see such beauty." Are the country people unappreciative because of over-familiarity? One would have thought that the effect of living always with Nature ought to make people love beauty of all kinds, spiritual and intellectual as well as material, and have high ideals all round in consequence. I suppose that to love beauty is really the same as having ideals. Do you think, Monica, that this appreciation of the beauty in Nature is in any way connected with moral character, or is it a result of education and something which may be acquired, or is it simply a natural gift independent of character or class or culture?

A friend of mine has just told me that it is wanting in the townspeople as well as in the country ones. She once took a Mothers' Meeting into the country from Croydon, and after vainly endeavouring to make the women turn their heads round to look at a lovely sunset, she was, as she thought, rewarded by an outstretched hand

From the Heart of the Rose

and eager face, and delighted exclamation,
“Oh, look at the colour”—but to the regret
of my friend the sentence ended with—“of
that there washing hanging on the line!”
One wonders what the woman would have
said if she had come to the Garden of Peace.

—Yours ever,

E. L.

XXIII

From one who is staying at Wiesbaden.

I ALWAYS like to send you a story, my dear Monica, whenever I hear one that I think will interest you. The following was told me by a man who was himself an eye-witness of the last act of the tragedy, though, as you will see, he could not have been present when the curtain rose:—

“It was in the reign of our King Henry the Eighth that the Turks besieged the famous Knights of Malta in their stronghold in the Isle of Rhodes. The Knights held out bravely, and the Turks had decided to raise the siege of the town in which the besieged were so strongly entrenched, when an arrow was shot into the Turkish camp from the city, with a letter attached to it, telling the Turks not to go away, as all the ammunition of the Knights would soon be exhausted, and they would be forced to surrender. The letter was written by one of the Knights, a Spaniard it is said, who had

From the Heart of the Rose

the charge of the magazines, and when, after a few days' interval, the garrison surrendered, it was thought by some that he had purposely hidden the bulk of the ammunition in his charge.

"Years passed, and in time the Church of the Knights was turned into a mosque.

"In the year 1800 a great earthquake occurred, which cracked what had been thought to be a blind wall, and revealed the presence beyond of a magazine containing a vast quantity of powder. For some reason it was not thought desirable at the time to remove this old powder, which had evidently been concealed there by the traitor Knight nearly three hundred years before, and the old magazine was again bricked up.

"Another half-century passed, and in 1856 a second earthquake with a terrific thunderstorm took place. This time the lightning struck the mosque, ran down to the crypt, and exploded the gunpowder. The resulting loss of human life was appalling. The mosque was surrounded with the dwellings of the Turks, and over six hundred of these people perished in this terrible explosion.

"Thus were the Knights avenged for the sacrilege done to their Church."

A point that interests me not a little in this account is, that I was born at Malta just

From the Heart of the Rose

when this earthquake was going on, the room in which I was lying being violently shaken, and portions of the ceiling falling to the floor. . . . I hope, Monica, you will appreciate the story and are glad that I survived the earthquake.

C. H. C.

XXIV

To an old chum.

I WAS so glad to get your letter and to hear you did not leave your bones in South Africa. I should never have heard even this detail about you if you had not answered our advertisement. That sounds rather as if you wanted a situation as gardener, or coachman; but if you did you would never get a place, for nobody, I feel sure, would ever give you a character! What fun we used to have! Do you remember that day on the cliff when the wind nearly blew us away, and we got drenched with spray, and couldn't hear each other speak, and you wrapt me up in an old coat, and all the seagulls battled with the wind just as we did? and then . . . do you remember how we got lost when we had that picnic in the castle ruins, and how we wondered how we could have done such a stupid thing when we both knew the way so well? I find myself laughing at the bare recollection of that adventure, and as I write I suddenly

From the Heart of the Rose

catch sight of my grey hair in the glass, which brings me back to the peaceful married present. Those *were* merry days! I remember . . . no, I will not remember anything else, for you never realised never mind, I do not care to remind you of it now. I am so perfectly content. Your pony would never do for me, many thanks; I want a *very* quiet one. I answered an advertisement to-day, "Cob, 14.2, suitable for an aged lady, will stand any length of time unattended." See what I have come to!

MONICA.

XXV

On reviews of books, with comments thereon.

YES, I have got beyond the stage of being hurt by reviews. They amuse me now, for I know well that if I only wait for second post I shall receive one which will absolutely counteract the last. If I am praised in the morning I shall be abused at night, and *vice versâ*. The only thing that really annoys me is, when some reviewer a little cleverer than the rest attacks my natural history facts. For instance, I write of a pheasant's nest I know, and I am told in dictatorial words that it could not possibly have contained eggs on the day I saw them there! I do not "dream" eggs into nests, and I never write a word of natural history which I do not myself observe and note, or find in notes belonging to my better half. One reviewer ends a delightful article thus: "We have greatly enjoyed this account of a garden dreamy-fair, where the weed never

From the Heart of the Rose

sprouts and the song-birds never fail; we believe everything the author tells us, but we draw the line at everlasting white sweet peas. There are white sweet peas and there are white everlasting peas, Monica, but—they are distinct. Something must be left for the gardens of Paradise." One reviewer says I describe my garden "with a lazy, ladylike grace." In the morning I am happy because I read that my "papers are very tender prose poems," in the afternoon I weep because my writing is described as "artificial stilted prose." But I cannot tell you of all I receive, for the cuttings fill many books. A friend writes, "I have read your book, and I see you have copied your own little boy for the hero; I can picture him all the way through in a wonderful way"—wonderful indeed! for the book was written two years before Dick was born!

MONICA.

XXVI

*To one whose thoughts travelled back
to the long ago.*

WHAT made you suddenly think
of the words I taught you in
the long ago? Here they are:—

“In the inner Me, Love,
When I think of Thee, Love,
I seem to see, Love,
No Ego, there.
But the *Me*-ness dead, Love,
And the *Thee*-ness fled, Love,
There is born instead, Love,
An *Us*-ness rare.”

That is a little *intense*, is it not! I suppose the commonplace will always rub the corners off the ideal. To which you will doubtless respond, “If you cannot realise your ideal, you must idealise your real.” Yes, I know; but how can I idealise store lists, orders for coal, and butcher’s bills? I suppose one can idealise life as a whole, but one runs the risk of being

From the Heart of the Rose

called a dreamer, and one's house is apt to become very untidy! After all, life is quickly over, little things do not really matter, and we ought not to waste our time on petty grievances. We are here "on duty," to make others happy.

MONICA.

XXVII

Monica found a letter in her post-bag signed "Horticulturist." It was not the correct signature. It should have been "Despot," for all men who have climbed to the top rung of the ladder in India are perforce despots. In the after years they still say "Come," and wonder that you do not "come," and "Go" and think it strange that you stay. But Monica's Despot always smiled, and was wondrous kind in spite of all despotism, and she loved to hear of his gardens in India.

DEAR MONICA,—Having spent many years of my life in India, and having given a good deal of attention to gardening, both in that country and here, it occurs to me that you, who are a zealous horticulturist, may like to hear something about Indian gardens. I will therefore jot down a few notes on two of my Indian gardens, one on the plains, and one on the hills.

From the Heart of the Rose

The first of these gardens was situated on the Adyár River, near Madras. The climate there is essentially tropical, and the only plants suited for cultivation are those which can bear tropical heat. For this reason but few English flowers really thrive. Even roses cannot be said to flourish, with the exception of the bright pink "Rose Edouard," brought, I believe, from Mauritius, which flowers freely and has a delicious scent. A good lawn on the plains of India is very rare, except at Calcutta, where the soil, in what is really the Delta of the Ganges, is favourable to the making of velvety turf. I found that it was far better to give one's attention to the numerous flowering plants indigenous to tropical countries, than to attempt to cultivate unwilling English flowers. At Madras there were plenty of the former to choose from. The lawns, for I had more than one, would not pass muster in this country; but they served as settings to beds of such plants as scarlet Hibiscus (*Hibiscus Rosa Sinensis*), which took the place of scarlet geraniums; *Allamanda grandiflora*, which I grew as a shrub, Pink and White Oleanders; *Clerodendron Balfouri*, which was one of our brightest and most ornamental shrubs; *Roupellia grata*, from South Africa; the free-flowering *Plumbago Capensis*, and

From the Heart of the Rose

Duranta Plumeri, which, with its bright blue flowers and yellow berries, grew well either as a shrub on the lawn or among other shrubs in a shrubbery.

The Crotons (*Codiaeum pictum*), which we grow in this country in our hothouses, were at Madras large and very ornamental shrubs. But the most attractive garden plants on the plains of India are the climbers. One of the most effective was the *Bignonia Venusta*, with its clusters of orange-coloured tubular flowers, drooping amidst bright shining leaves, which grew over an arch in the garden to which I refer. Not less beautiful was the brilliant *Ipomœa Rubra cœrulea*. This I grew in the following way. A pole was fixed in the middle of a circular bed from which ropes were stretched. The *Ipomœa* seeds were sown at the base of each rope, forming, as they grew, a sort of tent covered with enormous sky-blue flowers.

Other very beautiful climbers which grew in my Madras garden were the Combretum (*Poivreæa*) Coccineum, with its racemes of brilliant scarlet; and *Petrœa*, with star-like sprays of plum-coloured and grey blossoms. The *Thunbergia latifolia*, with its flowers of lavender tint, and *Antigonon Leptopus*, bearing clusters of bright pink flowers resembling

From the Heart of the Rose

in appearance clusters of tiny grapes, were also among the remarkable climbing plants which flourished at Madras.

In the plains of India flowering trees, as well as flowering shrubs, have great horticultural value, and add greatly to the beauty of the gardens and in some cases of the roads. The *Poinciana Regia*, with its masses of red and orange flowers, produces a gorgeous effect. The *Lagerstræmia Regina*, with its blossoms shading from pale rose to dark crimson, is found at Madras, as is the *Bauhinia Variegata*, somewhat resembling the Judas-tree, with flowers of various shades of rose. At Madras the climate is not sufficiently moist to grow the beautiful *Amherstia Nobilis*, of which there are excellent specimens at Calcutta, both in the Botanical Gardens and in the garden at Belvidere.

But beautiful and brilliant as are the flowerings, shrubs, and climbers, and the flowering trees on the plains of India, the true poetry of gardening is to be found on the Hills, and especially on the Nilgiris, the Blue Mountains of Southern India, where many of the flowers of Europe flourish with a semi-tropical luxuriance, almost beyond description. The growth of the Heliotrope is perhaps the most remarkable of any. At

From the Heart of the Rose

Ootacamund, in front of the principal hotel, there used to be two enormous bushes, each of which was ten feet in height and forty feet in circumference. In the Government Gardens at the same place, which are situated on a mountain slope, a broad path ascending the slope is protected on one side by a thick hedge, composed half-way up of Heliotrope and the rest of the way of Fuchsias.

My hill garden was at Coonoor, which is about 6000 feet above the sea, and 1500 feet below Ootacamund. The climate somewhat resembles that of the North of Italy. It is well suited for many plants indigenous to Europe, and also for various semi-tropical plants. In a shrubbery in my garden the scarlet Poinsettia, a shrub of the Tea-tree (*Camellia Theifera*), and a white Datura Arborea (*Brugmansia Candida*) grew in close proximity, the white flowers of the Tea-shrub and of the Datura presenting a pleasant contrast to the scarlet bracts of the Poinsettia. In this garden there was a wealth of Roses, especially Tea Roses and Noisettes, most of them raised from cuttings, and grown on their own roots. It might be said of this garden that it furnished daily a good supply of flowers for the drawing-room from Jan. 1 to Dec. 31. Not far from it there was a sort of wild garden cut out of a wood

From the Heart of the Rose

or *sholah* which had been partially cleared, but contained a number of very fine Tree-ferns, indigenous to the spot, among which flourished Fuchsias and other European plants; a mountain stream running down the centre of the garden. I must not omit to mention, in connection with my own garden, a beautiful creeping plant which grew along the banks of a channel running through the garden. It is called the *Torenia Asiatica*, or more commonly the "Sypàra Creeper." This plant is sometimes found in hothouses here, and, with perhaps the exception of our common English Primrose, is, I think, the most beautiful and most refined wild flower in existence. The flowers are small and bell-formed, in colour pale amethyst, with a large blotch of dark clear purple on the lower lobe, which sparkles like enamel. Its native habitats are the Sypàra Ghàt and Wainàd, from the latter of which localities I introduced it into my Coonoor garden. At and about Coonoor there were some very pretty ferns besides the Tree-ferns, among them an *Adiantum* very much like the *Capillus Veneris* of Devonshire. Another *Adiantum* found near Ootacamund on the same hills, was the *Adiantum Æthiopicum*, a very beautiful fern which is rarely, if ever, found in English hothouses. HORTICULTURIST.

XXVIII

A letter in the post-bag contained two long silver leaves from Table Mountain. On one there was a sketch of the mountain and the bay.

DEAR MONICA,—The silver-tree is about 15 or 18 feet high, and grows on the back of Table Mountain (3000 feet). There are but few other places in the world where they will grow. When you have climbed Table Mountain, you have the *real* thing; you are back in the days of the Acts of the Apostles, for there live my Zulus and Kaffirs—at least some hundreds of them—all fighting men, some famous warriors in their day, and now living simple, gentle lives, loving God and loving one another. At the foot of Signal Hill is a large military camp, also an enclosure, with about 1000 Boer prisoners; but up there you are in the days of the early Church. At home we are so overlaid with old growth, old cankerous branches; but

From the Heart of the Rose

up on the top of the mountain, among those brown and black men, the Vine is pushing out *new, pure, and fresh* shoots, full of sap from the Root. "*In that day shall the 'spring' of the Lord be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the land excellent and comely, for them that are escaped of Israel*"—a root out of a *dry* ground indeed, and all the more welcome for its unexpectedness. I have just received a letter from a dear deaf and dumb person whom I knew as a child in America; for some years I helped to teach her. I can remember her, when about seventeen, shutting herself up in her room and refusing to eat for some time—refusing also to communicate—because a friend had been convicted of some small theft. It seemed to her so awful that a Christian could sin. Now she feels that God has shut her out from the noise of the world in order that she may speak to Him in the silence, and hear Him speaking to her. I expect God opens the closed eyes and unstops the deaf ears to sights and sounds from which others by these very senses are debarred. Here is a pleasant thing from St. Augustin; it is almost a pity to spoil it by translating: "The glory of love is alive indeed (yet frost-bound), but the winter holdeth it still. The brave root

From the Heart of the Rose

cherisheth the life, but the withered branches have the semblance of death; yet in the heart of the tree the sap moveth itself; in the heart quickens already the summer leaves; already in the heart of it lieth in secret next autumn's fruitage. Oh! when will summer be here?" I think he means that the Christian life is like the life of a tree—full of immediate and apparent failure, ever slipping back after each rich summer into the barrenness of winter, keeping no leaves, no fruit, but little comeliness; yet which has gathered all the apparent failure into the continuous success of an unbroken growth. So we are willing to let go out of our lives the things which God would have perish, not even wishing to keep the leaves of last summer, since God will cover the earth again with foliage fresh, green, and vivid. English scenery seems somewhat thrifty after South Africa; but I love nature not to be always upon her high horse, and these little lanes and winding roads, even with the surly limitations of winter, are edged with poetry—northern, not tropical—English, not African—but sincere and good.

F. C. P.

XXIX

On magazine clubs in general and one in particular.

ARE you really going to start a magazine club? Be warned in time. We were likewise struck by the splendour of the same thought. Do you really want to know how it was managed? We began by having a big meeting with a live chairman and everything correct. Pencils and paper galore! We each handed in a slip with the twelve magazines we wanted written unintelligibly on each. It was a perfectly hopeless task, and eventually we chose the magazines nobody wanted. Then the real work of the winter began. We were only to keep the magazines three days. Fancy reading the *Nineteenth Century* in three days, when you had already four books on hand. They always managed to arrive when I was away from home, out of pure "cussedness." The whole of my pin-money was swallowed up in fines. I could

From the Heart of the Rose

have taken in about six magazines or more, and kept them for ever for the sum I paid in subscription and fines. Then whenever the magazines arrived they were always deposited *under* all the other books, and only came to light after the advent of sundry infuriated notes from neighbours who gloried in greater leisure than fell to my lot in life, and who were sitting aching for the books which failed to arrive from our house. Our vicar was in a still worse plight, for whenever magazines were forwarded to him a note on some pressing matter was always enclosed, and as he has a habit of never opening parcels, the chaos in his daily round may be better imagined than described. I verily believe he paid even more in fines than I did. Certainly we paid enough to start a second club, which is always a satisfactory thought. To open a parcel, say, on February 23rd, and find written clearly on each number therein, "Please forward on February 7th," positively reduces one to ashes. Then a note of abject apology and more parcels pour in, only to be hastily repacked and forwarded in a fever of haste. I never attempted to read a word from first to last, fearful lest by accident I should become interested in a story with the awful feeling of the three days' limit hanging over my

From the Heart of the Rose

head. Take my advice before it is too late. Under no possible condition allow yourself to be tempted to start or join a magazine club. It is still like a nightmare to me, and I know it was worse than a nightmare to our secretary, who arranged everything so beautifully. I can truthfully assure you it was a sad experience, and I wouldn't go through it again for anything.

MONICA.

XXX

To one who is very fond of sketching.

WE have been out sketching to-day, sketching willows in a bog. None of our pictures were in the least alike, and the artists differed too. But we all enjoyed ourselves, and we wished for you. Some of the party simply sat and frivelled, others worked as if their whole life depended on the quantity of paper they covered. This evening, in turning over some papers, I came across a letter which I now send you, for I think it will amuse you, as you, too, are fond of sketching.

“ . . . My great occupation and amusement, Monica, is what one friend irreverently describes as ‘paper-staining,’ and another as wholesale ‘manufacturing sentimental maps of a country.’ I hope you do not at once realise that these descriptions apply to—what kinder folk would term—my ‘impressionist sketches.’

“I am afraid, as a race, that amateur

From the Heart of the Rose

sketchers are a great nuisance to their friends, who are sometimes asked to wait about, cold, wet, and hungry, while the enthusiastic artist is absorbed in agonised effort to reproduce the scene before her. They do not understand the 'hope that springs eternal in the human breast' of fixing on canvas or paper some brilliant effect of light flashing across sky and landscape, which might otherwise have been lost for ever. To quote 'Abt Vogler,' 'Gone, gone, never to be again!'

"The sketching fever, once caught, returns with irresistible force whenever its victim finds his or herself in beautiful or picturesque surroundings. It attacks old and young alike. Well do I remember an aged aunt, far on in the eighties, as keen as ever, but with so many appliances hung round her waist, that we used to call them the 'Thirty-nine Articles!' They were all used in the old-fashioned drawings that appeared to us juveniles neutral and grey in colour, and so laboured in composition; while she, on her side, called the efforts of the younger generation 'fire and brimstone,' for red and yellow were they in portraying Italian brightness and Southern glow. So keen were these younger artists, that they could not waste a moment out

From the Heart of the Rose

of their precious time to feed themselves, so sandwiches were popped into their mouths by a kind mother, just as an old thrush stuffs worms down the open beaks of her hungry brood. Sometimes, in London, I have joined clusters of earnest and energetic sketchers following the experienced guidance of Mr. Augustus Hare to some picturesque spot, trotting meekly after him like the enchanted rats following the Pied Piper of Hamelin. So motley was our crew that a passer-by is reported to have said, 'Not smart enough for a wedding, or sad enough for a funeral. It must be, yes, it must be, a perambulating "Spelling Bee."' "

"Outsiders are very apt to scoff at a sketching party. They have a way of prowling round and taking stock of every effort, and then saying, 'Now, how can any one possibly guess that all these views are meant for one and the self-same thing?' Such scoffers should be reminded of the old adage, 'Many men, many minds.' Each mind can only represent a bit of the truth as it sees it, and even that is limited by its technical powers of execution. So we can wander on to another well-known saying, 'It takes all sorts to make a world,' and possibly, if all the sketchers were juveniles together, a truthful but

From the Heart of the Rose

somewhat curious mosaic might be arrived at.

“Of course, to avoid mistakes, it is well sometimes to write on a drawing, ‘This is sea,’ or ‘This is sky,’ ‘These are trees and not cabbages,’ and in the middle distance, ‘These objects are not eggs spilt on the road from a market-basket, but a flock of sheep lying about in various stages of exhaustion.’ I have one enthusiastic friend whose sunsets and sunrises are so gloriously unconventional, that it is impossible to know which is the top and which the bottom of the picture. Yet, she is aggrieved if the critic unwittingly holds them topsy-turvy, or demurs to her charitable suggestion, ‘I propose sending these to a hospital to cheer up the poor things.’ Query—Will it cheer up the poor things to have sketching conundrums put before them that neither they nor any one else can ever hope to solve?

“Another annoyance to sketchers are odious purists who object to the sucking of brushes, as if that was not quite the handiest and most natural way of getting rid of superfluous colour and arriving at a beautiful point. Such people have been even known to quote against the practice these touching, simple lines:—

From the Heart of the Rose

‘Little Boy,
Box of Paints,
Sucked his brush,
With the Saints.’

But in fact, instead of a deterrent, this gem of a poem acts as a distinct encouragement. Who would not suck his paint-brush if such was to be the consequence, and he could so easily find himself in the excellent company of the knights of yore, who ‘arrived’ by quite another fashion?

‘Their bones are dust,
Their good swords rust,
Their souls are with the Saints—we trust.’

Sketches, now and again, give pleasure to others, and even ‘sentimental maps of a country’ may have their use in reminding one, perchance, of a cherished home and sweet old-world gardens, beautiful scenes, or ‘days that are no more.’ . . . Farewell till another day.”

. . . While we are on the subject of painting, I should like to tell you I found an autograph letter signed “*Joshua Reynolds*” in A.’s book the other day. It was dated “London, December 3, 1784.” I copied the following sentence for you, which, coming from such a great painter, is full of interest and teaching:—

From the Heart of the Rose

“A painter who has no rivals and who never sees better works than his *own* is but too apt to rest satisfied and not take what appears to be a needless trouble of exerting himself to the utmost, pressing his genius as far as it will go.”

MONICA.

XXXI

*To one who advises Monica to belong to the
Pure Literature Society.*

THANK you very much for sending me the catalogue of the Pure Literature Society. I trust that I am not one to overrate my own powers, but I venture to think that I am competent to judge what books are fit to read aloud to my husband.—Believe me, I am very careful of his morals,

MONICA.

XXXII

*Monica wrote her "Nature Notes" for "May,"
but before sending them to her friend she
printed them in the "Londoner."*

MAY

THERE is gladness in the air. It creeps down the bare stems of the trees, it peeps up bravely from the brown mould and stirs the dead leaves, sometimes in its eagerness it actually breaks into blossom, leaving the leaves behind. You can hear it rippling in the song of birds, summer migrants bring it to our land from over the sea. The cuckoo's first note makes my heart beat, our home songsters sing of the same joy. So do the oxlips in what I call in vain conceit "My Lady's Border"; they, too, nod to one another, telling the same tale. All the world is gleeful, not only because spring has come, the gladness brings more to our mind than that; it is because winter has gone. This year the ash is still bare, while

From the Heart of the Rose

the oak is stippled in brown against the blue sky, so we may trust to the old proverb and look only for a splash. At the same time proverbs are rather out of fashion, for they do not suit the climate of to-day. Softly and gently spring awakens the life of the world, each little bird has its story to unfold, its tiny task to fulfil. Sometimes a shower comes and a rainbow circles the view, for in spring even raindrops reflect gladness, while a little child asks "Where do the rainbows go to, mother?" and the mother answers, "To the land where the spring comes from," and the child is satisfied. "Every vein of earth is dancing with the spring's new wine," and the sunbeams come racing to meet the budding land, simply overflowing with joy to feel the green breath of the land. Down by the river kingcups shine in the sunlight, in the wood primroses are peeping in patches, and here and there a bluebell begins to ring a peal. Strange and wonderful are the buds and blossoms of the trees. The larch, with its little tassel of emerald green and crimson flower. The beech's long transparent brown bud, through which the green, fan-shaped bunch of leaves creep. Tufts of oak-leaves on knotted twigs, with its tiny green flower. Slender, pencilled birch

From the Heart of the Rose

stems, with the long pale green catkins spotted with brown. All the fir-trees have different flowers; some boast of clusters of miniature gold fir-cones, and some crimson; while the modelling of the Spanish chestnut's baby pointed leaves is perfect. The horse-chestnut has great fat buds, a trifle vulgar in shape and size. Here and there the red flower of the elm shines against the blue, and all the while Budland is to some an undiscovered country worthy of note. Let the Londoner follow my advice when the week's work is over, and he leaves desk and pen and paper behind, and study for himself. In the air swallows are sporting in companies, having crossed "the vast and pathless ocean," from Africa and Asia, yet they find their way straight to old haunts, dancing over the same village green, flying over the very same garden, and building in the barn where he built last year. Bishop Stanley tells us "a pair of swallows, no doubt those of the preceding year, on their arriving, found their old nest already occupied by a sparrow, who kept the poor birds at a distance by pecking at them with its strong beak whenever they attempted to dislodge it. Wearied and hopeless of regaining possession of their own property, they at last hit upon a plan which effectually

From the Heart of the Rose

prevented the intruder from reaping the reward of his roguery. One morning they appeared with a few more swallows, their mouths distended with a supply of tempered clay, and, by joint labour, in a short time actually plastered up the entrance hole, thus punishing the sparrow with imprisonment and death by starvation! This year the chiff-chaff arrived on April 5th, and dear master cuckoo on the 19th. These two birds always mark the coming of spring. "Don't sow your best flower-seed till you have seen two swallows," is an old gardener's advice, for after all one swallow does not make a summer. "Ay, spring has come, for didn't yer hear that there chiff-chaff yesterday?" And the cuckoo? Why, every one hears the cuckoo, and tells every one else they have heard it. It is glad news. Nightingales this year are more numerous than ever, and answer each other all night long, never moving from a tree when a human listener pauses to hear the beautiful song. The wood wren is heard all day long; he is an odd little chap, for the two parts of his song are so utterly distinct from one another. Nobody would imagine that the rather harsh trill which the bird utters repeatedly was made by the same voice that produces those half-dozen mournful notes which make one feel

From the Heart of the Rose

inclined to sit down and cry. He first trills many times over, then runs through the sad passage, which is the same note repeated several times in a minor key, then back again to the trill. In the garden the black-cap is very noisy, flying from bush to bush. Naturally, he is scarcely ever silent, he has so much to say, for he too feels the gladness of springtime. The thrush does not pine for the hot days like the blackbird does. He sings in sunshine or shower, and pays no heed to a late frost. His mate has built her nest in the clematis on the house, close to a window, and, notwithstanding her trust, feels just a little shy, for she leaves her nest when any one passes by. Some say that the missel-thrush or storm-cock, as its name implies, sings best in the roughest weather, or just before a storm. This year he has earned his soubriquet, for he has been a veritable barometer, for whenever the weather changed or the glass began to fall he at once began to sing. Frogs by the riverside are keeping folk awake, and can be heard half-a-mile off, croaking out their love to one another. They are like an accompaniment of castanets to the song of the nightingale, and at first they sounded like the night-jar whirring in the wood. Was ever the world so fair? Gladness peeps out in the gold of the gorse,

From the Heart of the Rose

in the white may-blossom, in the blue gentian,
in the young life of nature. Children run
out of doors in glee to catch the sunbeams,
lambs frolic in the meadows, nestlings chirp
in the nests, and the old folk catch sight of a
flower-bud or sound of a song of a bird,
and smile as they say "I remember," think-
ing of some "Merry May" in the treasured
long ago.

XXXIII

Monica read a letter from a pretty niece and smiled. Then she went indoors and took a letter out of the oak bureau, and, after reading it, she smiled again. Afterwards she compared the two. The writers were of the same age—the dates were different.

1841

I INTENDED to have written yesterday in return for your letter which I received that morning, but we went out for a long walk, and I was so enraged at spoiling my new india-rubbers, by losing them in a muddy turnip-field, that I put it off till to-day. Amelia and I have trimmed our pellerines and sleeves with *crêpe, à la vieille*, but you have no pellerine. It is indeed very disagreeable to think of these things, the best way is to consider them matters of necessity. I had a letter from my dear Elisabeth this morning, I feel that I love her better than ever. I am so glad, my own dear love, that you are so happy.

From the Heart of the Rose

What a charming girl Emilia seems to be. I think we are very lucky in our friends. Really I have nothing much to tell you about home. We go on entirely in our usual routine. Mary and I, as soon as we have done our reading, rush to our drawing in the studio. Mary draws hideous skeletons, and I paint ugly pots and pans, Rosina reads Spanish, Adela is very diligent with her German. Then we take regular walks every day when the weather permits. Yesterday Emily and Maria called, but they do not appear to have had any very brilliant conversation. We are going to send up some music to change to-morrow; I have sent back your two English songs, and likewise those duets you never sing out of Don Pasquele and Sappho. I hope you will approve. I have sent for the opera of 'Guillaume Tell,' and 'Oberon.' Miss Wedgewood has given me a lovely song from the oratorio of 'Abram.' I told Adela, when she was pondering for something more to write to Blanche, that it was a sign of a strong mind to be able to shut up one's letter as one's brains began to *drop* their contents instead of *pouring* them. Mine are decidedly on the ebb, so I had better stop, and not give you the very dregs, particularly as the wine, though decidedly

From the Heart of the Rose

‘Ordinaire’ all along, might disturb your sobriety.—Ever then, dearest comate, your most veraciously affectionate F. M.”

1901

“It is awfully good of you to ask me down for the week-end; I should simply love to come, but I can’t! I have left undone a good many things that I ought to have done, but I have undertaken to do a good many more things that I ought not to have done. It’s like this. On Fridays I go to the Gym with Leah and Ethel, and that tiresome Mrs. — wants me to go to an orchestra practice in the afternoon to do the muffled drum thing, but I simply can’t, as I am due at the Guildhall for my lesson at four to five. On Saturday we do Chaucer. It is simply lovely, but really too funny for words, exactly like the ‘Alice’ book, you know, ‘’Twas brillig and the slithy tones.’ We did Hamlet last, and I liked that awfully, as one seems to know more about Hamlet than most things. Ethel was awfully funny. She read a bit about the ‘omnibus horse,’ meaning the ‘ominous house,’ I suppose. Of course she declares she didn’t say anything of the sort. I have promised to go on Saturday with Elsie to the Pop, and in the evening we play

From the Heart of the Rose

at a show somewhere down by Wapping, Father Somebody's temperance meeting. I haven't taken the pledge, for though I *never* drink anything but water, I like brandy chocolates. We are doing the 'Dead March' and a bit of the 'Meister Singers.'

"I should love to come down some other time when I have a spare day. Daisy and I are going for a tour at Whitsuntide; can you put us up for a night? Put us and the bikes in the loose-box if you are full up.

GLADYS.

"*P.S.*—I haven't seen you since the year blob."

XXXIV

To Luciole, who is ill, and asks to be amused.

I AM so glad you are getting better. Have a little patience and any amount of hope and you will pull through all right. Courage is needed in illness more than anything else, and the will to get well. If you could only fix your thoughts on the Power of love and healing, and not on your ailments and symptoms, you would quickly recover. But you bid me amuse you, and in my foolish way I begin to moralise! The moment I try to think of something amusing I feel as dull as ditch water. Let me think what has happened. A week ago I presented Miss Benner with one of my books. Yesterday when I went to see her I found her beaming. She told me that she liked my book so *very* much. I began to glow all over. She went on to say she liked it for two reasons. I glowed again. Guess what the reasons were? "*Because the print was large, and the book was short.*" You can imagine my feelings. My

From the Heart of the Rose

pride dropt below zero. You remember Selina? We were staying with her the other day, and she began life by apologising for not having my books on the table. "You see, dear Monica," she said sweetly, "we have so few books at present, and so many visitors, that I am obliged to buy readable books first." Wasn't that delicious? We have nothing exciting going on here now. To-day I have my Shrimp Tea. It really is a work-party for the S.P.G., but I think it sounds more friendly to call it a Shrimp Tea. We always have shrimps, so it is not a "pretending" Shrimp Tea, as Dick would say. To-morrow we are going to have a dinner-party. Twenty-two in the dining-room, and music to follow. Don't scream. Of course you would say six ought to be our limit, but you never know what you can do at a pinch. It really is the village drum-and-fife supper. We make the table very pretty, and pile all the lamps and candles on it. I don't mean to convey to you that we feed our guests on oil and grease, but I like the room to be very cheerful. The first time we gave a supper one of the men said next day it was like going into heaven. I could not help smiling, for crackers, oranges, and coloured muslin decorated with holly is not one's idea of heaven. Of course coming

From the Heart of the Rose

out of the dark wood into the glare of light was what he *felt*. When we were dining with the Merrimans I sat next a man at dinner who asked me where we lived. I mentioned Farnham, and the Castle, and Moor Park, "where Sir William Temple lived, you know!" "Does he live there now?" he asked. I returned baffled to my pudding, murmuring, "No, not now . . . I hardly know where he lives *now*." Have I written you enough nonsense? Oh! no, here is one more story. Willie Howard came over to see us from Aldershot not long ago; we like him so much. In the course of the afternoon, when we were sitting on the lawn, we got on to the subject of books and then papers. We asked him if he ever read the *Spectator*? Constance was staying with us, and as you know she and I have often written for that much-valued paper, so we were interested in hearing of it always, and how much it was appreciated. He shook his head at once. "Oh! no, thanks," he said, "even the words are much too long for me, the sense is far beyond me. There was one man once in the regiment who pretended to read it, but he died long ago. Just fancy buying the *Spectator*, Mrs. Monica, when you could get six copies of *Pick-Me-Up* for the same money!" Oh! how we laughed! Of

From the Heart of the Rose

course he did not realise the joke as we did. A friend has just told me that she went to visit a cottager that I know well, and knocked cheerfully at the door. The woman opened it with the greeting, "Oh! ma'am, I thought you were the coffin!" There had been a death in the family. My friend retreated gracefully, yet quickly; she had no curiosity to "view the corpse."

Get well quick and then come here in the summer and lie in the garden on my long chair, and I will cover you with roses.

MONICA.

XXXV

*Is chivalry dead? A question for every one
to answer.*

WE have had tremendous discussions lately as to whether chivalry is dead or not. I asked H., and he writes: "Taking the word in its original sense" (he always likes to go to the root of everything, bless him!) "ask yourself, 'Has the necessity for the order of chivalry ceased?' I say it has. In the old days mankind, generally speaking, was unchivalrous; it is now, through the process of civilisation and the march of time, become quite chivalric. The soldier of to-day no longer thinks of carrying off women as part of his spoil, he no longer treats them in a brutal or barbarous fashion, it is no longer necessary to maintain an order of knighthood to protect the oppressed. Taking the word 'chivalry' in a broader sense, symbolical of deep outward respect of women, or a feeling of romance, then, I

From the Heart of the Rose

think we may certainly say we are not so courteous as we were of old, nor are we so romantic. I very much doubt whether nowadays you would get many men to run in a race were the prize but a wreath of laurel. Everything we have, all that we strive to gain, must have its commercial value. This is the tone of feeling nowadays, and as romance and courtesy cannot be bought or sold, they have ceased in great measure to exist." I think I agree with H. He hits the right nail on the head when he talks of the race for the laurel crown. I wish the young men of to-day were as courteous as our fathers were. The very young ones are apt to turn their wives into squaws, and I resent it, for it is so bad for the man. I think women are a great deal to blame for men's bad manners, for you will never get what you don't expect! "Be courteous." . . . St. Paul was such a gentleman! I had another letter on the subject from Sir A. Here it is:—

"You ask me 'Why is chivalry dead?' My answer is that chivalry in the old acceptation of the word is not dead. Chivalry, as it is generally understood, means physical courage, consideration for others, and specially consideration and deference for

From the Heart of the Rose

the weaker sex. On all these points men of England at the present time compare by no means unfavourably with those we read of as having lived in the age of chivalry. Our soldiers and sailors, during the present war, both officers and men, have done numberless deeds which must be regarded as chivalrous in a very high sense. From the highest to the lowest they have cheerfully given their lives for their Queen and country. These are the actions which used to be called chivalrous in the olden times. The question is whether, with the advance of civilisation and the greater refinement of manners, we might not reasonably expect a greater and more general abnegation of self in the ordinary affairs of life. This is specially the case in political life. If our statesmen and our politicians generally possessed as much of the quality of moral courage as our soldiers and sailors possess of the quality of physical courage, then I think we might fairly assert that the Age of Chivalry not only has not died, but that it lives, and has reached a higher standard than ever. If our political parties and political men would sacrifice what they deem to be their own personal interests as readily and as cheerfully as our soldiers and sailors sacrifice their lives in battle, then I should say that the Present

From the Heart of the Rose

and not the Past is the Age of Chivalry. But this is an ideal which has not yet been attained." . . .

What do you say? I am sure you will agree that good manners are a token of the order of chivalry.

MONICA.

XXXVI

How Monica got her own way with an Editor.

I.

DEAR SIR,—I fear I cannot write you a paper on Greek customs.—Yours faithfully,
MONICA.

2. DEAR SIR,—I am obliged for your letter and renewal of offer, but I make it a rule (however absurd you may think it) never to write on a subject about which I am entirely ignorant.—Yours faithfully,
MONICA.

3. DEAR SIR,—It is impossible for me to accede to your request, for I am unable to *invent* Greek customs to order. I only write about birds and flowers.—Yours faithfully,
MONICA.

4. DEAR SIR,—Thank you for your letter, but I cannot write of Greek birds and flowers, &c.—Yours faithfully,
MONICA.

From the Heart of the Rose

5. DEAR SIR,—As you have given up the Greek idea, I shall be delighted to write you a paper on charcoal-burning.—
Yours faithfully, MONICA.

XXXVII

On sending flowers to the sick.

I WILL certainly send your sick friend some flowers. I rather pride myself on the way I pack them. Jessica taught me how to. I put wet blotting-paper at the bottom of the box, and over the flowers. I pack them very tight (*after* they have been in water), and do the box up in brown paper to keep the air out. They are bound to arrive fresh. Roses do not travel well unless in bud, and then you must wrap each bud in silver paper. Sweet peas go well, carnations best of all. What a pity it is some of the money spent on wreaths after the friend is dead is not expended on flowers beforehand, and sent to cheer the sick-bed. I often spend would-be wreath money on some permanent thing and give it in memory of my friend to some charity or church. Then the wreath lasts. I should like bunches of flowers thrown by loving hands on my grave all the same, but not

From the Heart of the Rose

expensive wreaths. I am convinced that flowers help one to get well. When I was very ill years ago, my room used to be quite full of flowers, I can see them all now. Flowers were the talisman which gave me courage and faith. Flowers whispered of hope, along the path of pain and suffering. First came the snowdrops, then primroses, and a glorious bowl of cowslips, and I never had so many lilies of the valley before or since. I remember one evening when even hope was tired out, some one came into my room with a bunch of fresh lilies and a bundle of white lilac. Sweet peace came again. Heather from a Scotch moor brought a fresh breeze, and helped me through the heat of a July day in London. Wild flowers made me dream of the hedges, and set me wondering if I should ever pick a spray of honeysuckle again. A branch of yellow roses made me determine to be well again by another summer. I should like to send this message to every one who has a garden and who does *not* send flowers to some sick friend . . . or foe! (If such a person exists, which I rather doubt.) "You who have flowers, share them with the sick and suffering; you who have flowers, send them to the sad and sorrowing. Do not tarry on

From the Heart of the Rose

the way, but send them, and reap blessings for the kindly deed. They are the King's jewels; each blossom blooms in answer to His Will, and surely for some good purpose. They are entrusted to your care, a precious trust for the sake of others. You who have health may not understand so well, but I have suffered . . . perhaps that I might tell you what a blessing flowers are. One flower may breathe hope, another courage, another patience—you can never know, only send them?"

I want to tell you that this morning a great black cloud hung like a pall over the garden, when my curtain was drawn, and, as I was anxious, I thought at once it betokened sorrow. At the same moment from the heart of the cloud (but invisible to me) a lark literally burst into song. I never heard such a splendid throbbing torrent of joy. As I fixed all my thoughts on the song, the cloud slowly rolled away and once more the sun shone. MONICA.

XXXVIII

Monica was just going to write her August Nature letter when she opened her post-bag. There she found an account of a walk in the north, and she knew it was better than anything she could write, so she sent it on to her friend instead of writing herself. The pages brought a breath of pure fresh air; and such a glimpse of nature's loveliness made one forget there were such things in the world as sorrow and war and partings.

WESTMORELAND, August 1.

THERE is so much to tell you, Monica, from here, that I don't know where to begin. This odd little corner of Westmoreland, wedged in between two bits of Lancashire, is about the sunniest place in the north of England, and very mild it is too, as Morecambe Bay runs in so close. The hills are limestone, and parts of the valley are a sort of slate. The 'mosses' towards the sea are rich

From the Heart of the Rose

black peat, so you can imagine what a happy chance it gives one of seeing and finding many birds and flowers. To-day I had a delightful ramble, and saw so much. I can't remember half of it, but I long to tell you all; the country is so delightful that once out, the joy of life thrills one through and through, and makes one feel quite young again! Starting through a hazel coppice, amongst which were many little wild strawberries now ripening fast, the track leads into an open wood, where one can still hear a chiff-chaff or a wood-wren. There is a thick undergrowth of brambles growing up round the grey rocks, and wood-sage, upright St. John's wort, a few foxgloves, and here and there a mullein. When the rocks are hot in the afternoon sun, butterflies come and sit on them for half-an-hour at a time — peacocks, red admirals, and a spotted one which I think must be a fritillary. There is a plant in this wood which the people here call frankincense, a dull-coloured composite flower which grows a little like tansy, with a strong, bitter smell. The path ends in a big field of rough grass, dotted with bushy junipers, thyme, and the yellow common rock-rose. I always put up larks crossing this field, and seldom pass without seeing common blue and small

From the Heart of the Rose

copper butterflies if the day be bright. The pasture runs to the edge of a little bluff about thirty feet high—the old coast-line, where the sea came up over the peat-bogs. Now yews grow in all possible crevices of the cliff, clinging wonderfully close. I turned to the right over a wall into a thick wood, to find a track down the little cliff. Standing among the larches I heard wood-pigeons cooing, then to my joy a family of tits passed just below me—blue, marsh, and great tits—murmuring and twittering happily as they came along the tops of some firs and birches which grew at the foot of the bluff. A tree-creeper was very busy near by, and let me have a beautiful view of him. There are often long-tailed tits here too, it is so sheltered and sunny. A scramble down the side of the rocks and over another wall brings one to a narrow lane, bordered on the far side by an old thorn hedge, which is a tangle of clematis, brambles, and honeysuckle. Meadow cranes-bill is out now, and close by a mass of common thistles, where there is a wonderful show of red admirals and peacocks flying lazily round, then perching again with outspread wings, like living jewels. From here I made a bee-line across the mosses to the river. At the edge of the moss, where the

From the Heart of the Rose

peat has been dug out for some time, there is a mass of rose-willow herb, and close to it some tall St. John's wort. Past it there are willows and sweet bog-myrtle, bog-asphodel in flower, and ling, tall, beautiful, and bushy; it grows three feet high and more, far more luxuriant than I have ever seen it elsewhere. One may see a grouse or two, but the little heather birds do not come down here; perhaps it is too wet for them. The boggy track leads one straight across the moss to the far side, where there are more willows and more peat, and then a crop of oats grown on reclaimed land, scarlet pimpernel and camomile flowering at their feet. From this point I got into the holmes, big pastures by the riverside, and disturbed some green plover and an old heron. The irrigation ditches are full of rushes and fig-wort, tall weeds, loosestrife in flower, and masses of toadflax covered with bloom along their banks. One day I found a purple columbine in flower, its grey green leaves already beginning to turn red. I am told it is not a genuine wild flower, but it must have strayed a long way from a garden here. Great flights of gulls come in from the Bay and mix with rooks in looking for grubs; they seem mostly to be the small black-headed gulls in various stages. In the winter there

From the Heart of the Rose

are wild-fowl of all kinds about here, even swans, and now one may see coot, moorhens, and wild duck on the little tarn through which the river runs. A footpath took me by the river bank on to the Windermere road, and crossing Blayoragg bridge brings one into North Lancashire, that curious detached bit which used to be connected with Lancaster, by a most perilous way, across the shifting sands of Morecambe Bay. The road leads over rough land to the foot of the hills. Oh! Monica, what a delight it would be to you. By it, or close to it, there is now bracken, whin, ling, and bell heather, ragwort, yarrow, harebells, wild pansies, greater knapweed, other little hard heads, common thistles, betony, eyebright, yellow toadflax, two kinds of scabious, agrimony, mint, golden red brambles in flower and their fruit setting, raspberry canes covered with excellent raspberries, and one or two gooseberry bushes. All these in less than a mile from the bridge. Last but not least, a curious woody St. John's wort, with handsome leaves and a small pale-yellow flower, from which a mass of feathery stamens stand out almost three quarters of an inch. I come constantly to see that no tripper has touched this precious plant, and so far it is quite safe. Perhaps it is a rough road

From the Heart of the Rose

and not attractive to bicyclists. Turning homeward there is a glorious view up the valley of the distant hills, for the Lakes are only ten or twelve miles away, and Coniston Old Man and Langdale Pikes are quite near. Within a walk one can find the limestone polypody, English maidenhair, wall-rue, hartstongues, and other commoner ferns; and there are many shrubs, mosses, and fungi which are quite strange to me. To-day I saw a bully and many chaffinches, yellow-hammers, and common buntings in the hedgerows after crossing the river into Westmoreland. A weasel met me playing by the side of the road, apparently frisking for pleasure, but fled at the sight of me. My way in led me through a big coppice which must have been carpeted with primroses and violets in the spring; now there is little but a yellow flower not unlike cow-wheat, whose name I know not. Plenty of jays and a few magpies live about the taller trees here, one can be sure of seeing or hearing one if not both. There is an enormous amount of nuts this year, and they are already tipped with pale pink, like the faintest possible blush. Through an orchard, and past a dear old-fashioned farm, shaded by a splendid walnut-tree, one reaches the road close to

From the Heart of the Rose

the gate of home. Ivy grows all over the walls here just like Devonshire, mixed with polypodys and herb-robert, which seem to grow happily out of the smallest crevices. Great tutsan has seeded itself all along the drive, and is still flowering; while squirrels and rabbits are already enjoying life in and under the trees. They know they are safe and will not be hurt. When I tell you I can see all this and much beside in an hour and a half, or a walk of four miles, you can guess what a delightful country it is. I do wish you were here, Monica; one longs for some one in love with nature to share it with. This old house used to be called 'Hell Cat,' a much more picturesque name than Halecote, which is modern and uninteresting. The cottagers burn peat from the mosses. It is a country of border towers, I would have you know, old farm-houses in which yeoman farmers have lived from father to son for four, five, and six generations: a country full of traditions of '15 and '45. It was once upon a time mostly forest, where outlaws lived for years without being caught, particularly in the Wars of the Roses. Some of the fells are carboniferous limestone, and have taken wonderful shapes, strange big slabs, fissures eight and ten feet deep, where a sheep may

From the Heart of the Rose

fall down and die of starvation. There are a few straggling red deer on the wildest fells, hawks and curlews on the hills. I can tell you no more to-day, though I feel I have not told you the half I want you to know and see. . . .”

XXXIX

In answer to a question.

WHAT is the good of minding what anybody says? It only results in making oneself miserable, and if you try and please everybody you will succeed in pleasing nobody. The only thing in life (as I have so often said) is to *do one's best*, and to do it in your own way. God patterns each one of us separately. Aim high, and make up your mind never to reach your ideal, simply because the higher one gets the higher one's ideal becomes. I heard the other day this saying, "He who makes no mistake makes nothing." Take that to heart; one cannot always succeed, and in trying to work one must therefore make mistakes; but it is, after all, much better to try than to sit still and do nothing. . . .

MONICA.

XL

In the post-bag Monica found a letter from a man of law which interested her intensely. It set her thinking, and—though it made her sad, it made her glad too.

.

MY lack of leisure has been mainly due to absorption in a most interesting case. Here is an outline of it. At the beginning of last century one William —, probably a farmer's son in the Lake country, entered the Cumberland Militia. In 1805 he married Isabella — at Newcastle, and a little girl, Margaret, was born. In 1808 poor Isabella was put on her trial for stealing some gingham and a coin. She was sentenced to seven years' transportation. A son, William, was born immediately after her conviction. Her husband left the militia (we have found the record—he was given 16s. 6d. for his fare to Whitehaven), and either accompanied or followed his wife to Australia.

From the Heart of the Rose

The boy William was taken with them. The girl Margaret was left behind.

In Australia the number of the family was increased to nine, including a son James, who died the other day, unmarried, and without a will, leaving from two to five million pounds. The problem is to find the missing sister Margaret, for she (or her descendants) is entitled to one-ninth of the estate, *i.e.* many thousands of pounds, and three distinct families (at least) come forward and declare that their mother was that particular Margaret left in England so many years ago.

So for months past I have been sitting over papers full of legends of the innumerable —— race, and trying to piece together family pedigrees from the records of births, marriages, and deaths from many a town and village of the Lake country, if, perchance, I may track the lost home of the old Cumberland militiaman who died in Australia in 1827, aged 45. You can have no idea, Monica, how fascinating these copies of the mouldy old church records become. One sits over them by the hour, and little by little the old, obscure, long-forgotten village history (and scandals) live before one. Here for instance is the entry of the marriage of a John —— to Elizabeth ——.

From the Heart of the Rose

baptisms and find : “ Nov. 17, Ann daughter of Elizabeth W^d.” Why Widow? I turn to the deaths, and there is : “ Nov. 16, John ——.” A whole little village tragedy complete! The child baptized the day after its father’s death, perhaps carried to the font by Elizabeth the “w^d.” past the new-made grave. It all happened a century ago, and was buried—seemingly for ever—in the sands of time. Yet a chance led a barrister to piece those three short separate entries together—guided by that “w^d.” which it pleased some old parson or clerk to record—and the sorrows of Elizabeth, are rescued—momentarily, at any rate—from the oblivion that has veiled millions who lived and loved and married and wept where she did, in the villages of England. The particular claimant whose title we are now investigating declares that her mother Margaret went to Liverpool and married a bricklayer named ——. Apoplexy ended his life in an asylum, and this claimant to enormous wealth was known as “No. 100” in a Liverpool orphanage. . . . I have now got the actual copy of the charges on which Isabella —— was sentenced to seven years’ transportation in 1808. A portion of it may interest you, Monica :—

“The Jurors for our Lord the King upon

From the Heart of the Rose

their oath present that Isabella —— the wife of William ——, on the 25th day of March in the 48th year of the Reign of our Sovereign Lord George the 3rd by the Grace of God of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland King Defender of the Faith with force and arms at the parish of Wakefield in the West Riding of the County of York one leather purse of the value of six pence, one piece of silver of the current coin of this Realm called a shilling of the value of two pence and one piece of silver of the current coin of this realm called a sixpence of the value of two pence of the Goods and Chattels of one Mary Brettener then and there found did then and there feloniously steal take and carry away against the peace of the said Lord and King his Crown and Dignity.” A second count repeats most of this palaver and charges her with stealing “23 yards of Cotton commonly called Gingham of the value of ten pence.”

Cannot you imagine poor Isabella standing in the dock, waiting in bewilderment while all this jargon was being buzzed in her ear—waiting for the sentence, which was the only thing that interested her? Much of this quaint formality survives in our criminal trials. I have often felt the irony of it all, the wigs, the robes, the Court Crier with

From the Heart of the Rose

his antiquated proclamations, the legal arguments, the impassive faces of the warders, the unsympathetic rigidity of it all, and, caged in the dock, the human creature waiting for the fate that is to emerge from all this incomprehensible rigmarole and ceremony. Tolstoi's "Resurrection" contains a wonderful description of a Russian trial. We are not quite so bad as that, but there is much that reminded me of what I have seen in English courts. There is so much that is, and perhaps must be, I will not say *inhuman*, but *non-human* and mechanical about it all, and, where the case is not obviously sensational, this seems to overwhelm the rest. One looks round the court at the watching faces, and there seems so little imagination, so little sense of the tragedy underlying the scene, of the wrecked life, of the possible temptations which "but for the grace of God" might have landed us in that same dock. Worst of all are the women spectators with their opera-glasses who crowd to a sensational case with the same vulgar hope of excitement as takes them in shoals to a fashionable wedding, or a war in South Africa, or the latest "improper" play. It is said that counsel once applied that all ladies should be requested to leave the court. "I think,"

From the Heart of the Rose

retorted the judge, gazing hard at a benchful of women, "that all *ladies* have left it already." Of course, with judges and counsel and court officials there is a natural tendency, as time goes on and the dreary procession of criminals lengthens out, to yield to the influences of routine and sink the man in the professional. It is a constant temptation, against which one has to be on one's guard, just as, with the doctors, there must be a tendency—to which the finer spirits do not succumb—to lose real sympathy with pain, and substitute merely such a professional manner as is useful for business purposes. I have heard of a learned judge who tried a murder case. The jury retired to consider their verdict. The judge retired to his room to await the event, and, whilst there, began a funny story. He was interrupted by a summons to the court. The jury had found the poor wretch guilty. The judge passed sentence with a most impressive speech, imploring the convict to make his peace with his Creator while there was yet time. Then the prisoner went out to await the day when he should be "hanged by the neck till he was dead," and the judge went out and completed his funny story.

But please don't think, Monica, that we are all like that.

XLI

To one who thinks she is in love.

MY dear, how can I possibly tell you whether you love the man or not? Are you ready to give up everything, casting aside the fallacy of the moment that he will give up everything to you? Are you ready to be an angel in the house, a maid-of-all-work, and—a good-tempered woman? But, seriously, you can't be in love if you can pause to put the question down in black and white. And I pray of you never to marry if you are not over head and ears in love. I send you a little poem, which I give you full leave to call sentimental and—if you like—even silly. At the same time it is utterly—irrevocably true.

It cannot be love, my darling,
If one dream of life is your own ;
It cannot be love, if ever
You're thinking of bearing alone.

From the Heart of the Rose

It cannot be love—I tell you—
If self is not dying—no, dead ;
It cannot be love if sunshine
Is not filling the heart instead.

It cannot be love if Heaven
Has not woven the pearl-link'd chain ;
It cannot be love, if in losing
You but count it an endless gain.

It cannot be love, if doubting
Ever touches the priceless trust ;
It cannot be love, but spending
You feel to be spent you must.

It cannot be love, if living
Is not part of a love entwined ;
It cannot be love, 'less willing
You bend to the master mind.

Does that find an echo in your heart ?
MONICA.

XLII

In the month of January.

SO you really want me to write you what it pleases your majesty to call a "Nature letter" every month, straight from the lips of the garden, this garden of Peace which you love and I love? Must I babble to you of flowers and birds? The blame, surely, will rest on your own shoulders if I bore you intensely, for it is difficult to put a drag on one's pen when one is writing of what one loves best. But I suppose, as you live all the year round in a town, you want the songs of my birds and the scent of my flowers to reach you. Even in mid-winter you must long for a clear ray of sunlight and a white patch of snow.

At this present moment the snow is deep on the ground, and weighing down the rhododendrons and shrubs. Outside my window the holly-tree, with scarlet berries shining in the sun, is covered with birds. Blackbirds and missel-thrushes and every-

From the Heart of the Rose

day thrushes. I peep round my curtain and watch them as they cling to a small branch and feast. Our minds are wholly occupied in the feeding of birds and then in watching them feed. Hanging from the verandah are our four Venetian buckets full of hemp-seed for the titmice, also walnut-shells full of lard are hung upside down by a thread. On a table in the snow we put nuts for nut-hatches, and a little way out on the grass we clear a patch in the snow and cover it with wheat and different seeds. An old cock blackbird with a golden beak has appointed himself (without so much as "by your leave") keeper of the ground, and at first he warned off all intruders in a surly, exclusive manner; but good food and plenty has improved his temper, and now he even welcomes strangers. When a dear pair of hawfinches arrived, the garden birds looked a trifle askance at them and wondered who they were, but their manners proved them to be quite gentle-folk, so they were allowed to stay. We have wagtails and yellow-hammers from "outside the garden" and from inside robins, thrushes, blackbirds, all the titmice family, eleven chaffinches, green linnets, starlings, hedge-sparrows, and of course common sparrows. After the hawfinches I look on

From the Heart of the Rose

bramblings as our most honoured guests. They are such handsome, well-groomed birds, with distinct red marking on the wings of the cocks. We have sixteen different kinds of birds in all. Of course they quarrel a good deal, but they never sulk, and seem very grateful for all our attention. A day or two ago one other visitor, a distinctly uninvited guest, came to the repast—a huge old brown rat. The birds were rather upset at his appearance, but did not move off altogether, only looked at him suspiciously and gave him a wide berth. Alas! he paid for his breakfast with his life. We sent for a man and a gun, and “the subsequent proceedings interested him no more!” Birds are just beginning to sing, and we have a starling mimicking the cry of a sparrow-hawk. “He only does it to annoy, because he knows it teases.” I have nothing else to tell you except that partridges have paired. They ought to have waited for the blessing of St. Valentine, but I suppose they too have heard that all old traditions are out of date. I saw a squirrel digging on the lawn just now; suddenly a jay screamed on the other side of the wall in the wood, and instantly Mr. Squggy raced off in alarm. Do you think squirrels are afraid of jays? or do you think he took the scream for warning of the

From the Heart of the Rose

approach of an enemy? I can't make up my mind on that point, and I feel positively certain you will not be able to solve the problem. You will perhaps remember a passing incident last year? We showed you a nest in a tree down the hollow, and knowing you knew nothing of natural history, we told you it was a squirrel's nest. If my memory fails me not I *think* you asked eagerly if we should find any squirrel's eggs therein? Perhaps, I dreamt the whole tale!—and perhaps I did not! Rooks pass out over the garden every morning at eight o'clock, on the way to their feeding-grounds, and return at five o'clock. They are never a minute late.

I will tell you no more to-day, for I may weary you.

MONICA.

XLIII

On the character of a servant.

DEAR MADAM,—I have received your letter asking me for the character of my parlour-maid. I fear she will not suit you. You ask “if she is absolutely good-tempered, an early riser, perfect in all her duties, good-looking, healthy, will never entertain followers, Church of England regular communicant, plain dresser, very quiet and respectable, a non-breaker, good needlewoman, clean, tidy, a total abstainer, and member of the G. F. S.” I thought you advertised for a maid, I did not realise you wanted an archangel, or that you required her for a place in paradise.—Yours truly,

MONICA.

XLIV

*To a friend interested in many subjects, with
copies of letters from W. Farren, Catherine
Blake, and John Linnell.*

I WISH you could have seen A.'s book of autograph letters. I felt obliged to turn each leaf with the utmost reverence. The first I came to was signed "Amelia Opie," and I was filled with delight. Was she not an ancestor of my very own, an authoress, the wife of a celebrated painter, and—a Quaker? The letter began with "thee" and "thou," and I determined to copy it out for you. Alas! she only wrote to ask one—Robert Nasmyth—the strength of saltpetre, and how much she might take without making herself seriously ill! Hastily I turned the leaf! The next letter was signed "W. Farren," and was from the actor. Was he the son of Eliza Farren, who appeared as Miss Hardcastle in 1777 at the Haymarket Theatre? Here is the letter:—

From the Heart of the Rose

“MY DEAR HARRY,—I write this in my dressing-room on a scrap I found in the Book of ‘Ivanhoe,’ which I have read during the pantomime. I am *astonished* that I play’d “Isaac” seventeen years ago! but being seventeen years older, and, I trust, *wiser*—there is nothing to do in it, and what there is, I cannot do now—if I ever could—TRAGEDY—pray say so to Mr. Osbaldiston. —Yrs. truly,
W. FARREN.”

The next letter I read was signed “Catherine Blake” (14th Sept. 1800), the wife of William Blake, poet, painter, engraver. Born in London, 1757. Even as a child he is described as “dreamy and visionary!” In 1789 he published his “Songs of Innocence,” written, printed, and illustrated by himself with his wife’s help. Here is her letter to Mrs. Flaxman:—

“MY DEAREST FRIEND,—I hope you will not think we could forget your services to us, or any way neglect to love and remember with affection even the hem of your garment. We indeed presume on your kindness in neglecting to have called on you since my husband’s first return from Felpham. We have been incessantly busy in our great removal, but can never think of going with—

From the Heart of the Rose

out first paying our proper duty to you and Mr. Flaxman. We intend to call on Sunday afternoon in Hampstead to take farewell, all things being now nearly completed for our setting forth on Tuesday morning. It is only sixty miles, and Lambeth was one hundred, for the terrible Disart of London was between. My husband has been obliged to finish several things necessary to be finished before our migration; the swallows call us fleeting past our window at this moment. O how we delight in talking of the pleasure we shall have in preparing you a summer bower at Felpham; and we not only talk, but behold the angels of our journey have inspired a song to you.

‘TO MY DEAR FRIEND, MRS. ANNA
FLAXMAN

‘This song to the flower of Flaxman’s joy,
To the blossom of hope for a sweet decoy,
Do all that you can or all that you may
To entice him to Felpham and far away.

Away to sweet Felpham, for Heaven is there,
The Ladder of Angels descends thro’ the air,
On the Turret its spiral does softly descend,
Thro’ the village then winds, at thy cot it does end.

You stand in the village and look up to Heaven,
The precious stones glitter in flights seventy-seven,
And my Brother is there, and my Friend and Thine
Descend and ascend with the Bread and the Wine.

From the Heart of the Rose

The Bread of sweet Thought and the Wine of Delight
Feeds the village of Felpham by day and by night,
And at his own Door the blessed Hermit does stand,
Dispensing Unceasing to all the whole Land.

‘W. BLAKE.’

“Receive my and my husband’s love and
affection, and believe me to be yours affectionately,
CATHERINE BLAKE.”

How prettily and gracefully they wrote
in the old days! Now if we want a friend
to spend the day with us, we send a post-
card or a sixpenny telegram! We have no
time to be tenderly civil, though at heart
we are as loving as ever.

The third letter I copied for you was
still more exciting. It was John Linnell’s
most interesting letter to Bernard Barton,
1830, in reference to William Blake.

“To MR. BARTON,
of Woodbridge, Suffolk.

“PORCHESTER TERRACE,
BAYSWATER, *April 3, 1830.*

“DEAR SIR,—I thank you sincerely for
the very beautiful sonnet, but as it is not
applicable to me, I hope you will not upon
any account publish it with my name, or
with any hint that it is intended for me, for
I assure you I have not the least claim to it;
and even if I had, I should equally dislike it,

From the Heart of the Rose

for if ever I have the happiness to be of any service to a friend I should avoid the public praise of men, that the Pharisee's reward might not be my lot. I do not see, however, why the sonnet may not be published without the name of Mr. Blake or myself, but simply addressed to the 'Friend of neglected genius' or something like that.

"I am very glad you were so kind as to send me a copy before publication, because it gives me the opportunity of correcting a mistake, which is a sufficient reason why the names should not be mentioned; it is that Mr. Blake never was reduced to live in a garret as asserted in the memoir, and I am sorry Mr. Cunningham did not avail himself of the information I offered him, as he might have made his very interesting memoir still more instructive and far more creditable to Mr. Blake by the alteration of some things and the addition of others with which I could have furnished him.

"When I first became acquainted with Mr. Blake he lived in a first floor in South Molten Street, and upon his landlord leaving off business and retiring to France, he moved to Fountain Court, Strand, where he died. Here he occupied the first floor; it was a private house kept by Mr. Banes, whose wife was sister to Mrs. Blake. It was

From the Heart of the Rose

here that he began to feel the want of employment, and before I knew his distress he had sold all his collection of old prints to Messrs. Colnaghi and Co. After that I represented his case to Sir Thomas Laurence, Mr. Collins, R.A. and some other members of the Royal Academy, who kindly brought it before the Council, and they voted him a donation of £25, which was sent to him through my hands, for which he expressed great thankfulness. This, however, was not enough to afford him permanent support, and it was in the hopes of obtaining a profit sufficient to supply his future wants that the publication of 'Job' was begun at my suggestion and expense; but as I had also the expectation, and have still, of remuneration (the plates being my property), I have no claim to any notice upon that account; and though we were both disappointed in our expectations as to the extent of the sale, yet a few buyers of the work being the most distinguished for taste and learning, we were sufficiently encouraged to commence another work which Mr. Blake did not live to complete. It was the illustration of Dante. He made one hundred folio drawings, some of which are highly finished, and began seven plates (all in my possession). This work, however, answered the purpose of furnishing

From the Heart of the Rose

him with the means of comfortable subsistence to his death.

“I have thought this would not be uninteresting to you, and could add much more, but I am not able to write long. There is one thing I must mention—I never in all my conversation with him could for a moment feel there was the least justice in calling him insane; he could always explain his paradoxes satisfactorily when he pleased, but to many he spoke so that ‘hearing they might not hear’; he was more like an ancient pattern of virtue than I ever expected to see in this world; he feared nothing so much as being rich, lest he should lose his spiritual riches; he was at the same time the most sublime in his expressions, with the simplicity and gentleness of a child, though never wanting in energy when called upon.

“If you are in London and will favour me with a visit, I shall be most glad to show you his works in my possession, and communicate what I know respecting him.—I am, dr. Sir, yours respectfully,

“JOHN LINNELL.

“*P.S.*—I have sent a plain copy of the ‘Job’ for your inspection; the price to you will be the same as the trade price—£2, 12s. 6d.

From the Heart of the Rose

"The print you are so good as to offer me I must decline. I do not collect modern prints, and indeed I have left off buying any, as my family is large and the work of 'Job' not yet having paid its expenses.

"You are welcome to keep the book for a fortnight, perhaps some friend may like to have it if you do not purchase it; at any rate you are perfectly welcome to the perusal of it."

This letter, coming from the great artist John Linnell, gives us a pathetic insight into the life of William Blake, "poet, painter, engraver." Alas! nowadays, too, artists have a bitter battle to fight against the enemy "Poverty." I heard the other day of a poor artist who sold his masterpiece, into which he had painted his very soul, for the paltry sum of £5—to save his wife's life! If he could have waited, the picture, doubtless, would have been hung at the Academy and sold for a large sum, and the artist's name would have been made. The rich men of to-day do not encourage modern art. If pictures are not sold, artists cannot afford models or foreign travel, and they have to starve at home, painting "pot-boilers" to keep body and soul together. Men give several

From the Heart of the Rose

hundred pounds for an old paper edition of a book they will never read. I plead for the modern art of England; if encouraged it will improve, and the rich men will reap their reward.

MONICA.

XLV

*To a nephew in South Africa, after a visit
to the sea.*

DID I tell you, dear boy, that we have been to Margate? At first I felt a little ashamed to confess this fact, for whenever I told my friends where we were going they always drew themselves up, and with just a suspicion of a gasp said, "Oh! —*Margate*," as if we were already almost beyond the pale for even suggesting such a place. Now I don't mind one bit, for Margate is the best seaside place in England, and has quite made Dick strong again. The sands are so splendid (at the right end) and the air fills one with life. We were almost outside Margate, beyond the range of the pier and "the vulgar little boy." Oh! it *was* fun. We had a little tent on the sands, and there we sat all day drinking in the air and watching humanity. Humanity really is a most amusing study at such a place. I don't mean the painted ladies with golden

From the Heart of the Rose

hair done in a wonderful way, or the smart women of fashion, they hardly ever came to our Bay, but families of cockney tourists who said, "It's a lovely dye, do come and ply," and "Oh! I sye, look at Dysie, she's filled the bybie's mouth with sand." Then the group who have come for the day and who always bring a funny man with them. He picks up the long streaming sea-weed and holds it on either side of his face, then taking little dancing steps, strikes an attitude and exclaims in tragic tones, "'ere's tresses of 'air for you, gals." Bathing of course was a great amusement, and everything is worked on the general principle that "nothing matters at Margate." Oh! the cruelty of the mothers at Margate. They made all the babies bathe, and all the babies screamed, and the mothers only laughed and thought it a great joke. Once or twice I tried to remonstrate, but it was no good; and after all, as H. observed, the babies were theirs to do what they liked with, not mine. We called it "the sad sea wail." Children are always disobedient on the sands, but that did not seem to matter either. "Come along, my dottie 'ittle sunbeam, come to your Mummy Mum"; but the dottie 'ittle sunbeam edged its fat little body farther and farther into the sea, and the mother went on with her

From the Heart of the Rose

knitting quite unperturbed. I really did lose my temper one day when a nursery-maid dug a hole in the sand and made her charges bury thirty live crabs in it, "for fun," and then jump on them. I *stormed* at that nursery-maid. We should have made a picture for *Punch*. She was very fair, small, and half-starved, clad in a thin scanty old black frock which was tucked up above her long bare legs, and her wisp of hair tucked into a tight knot under her sailor hat, which was cocked on one side. Though I literally towered above her, she bravely stormed back at me and told me in language which I refrain from repeating, that I might mind my own business. I appealed to her womanhood, but that was useless, she possessed none; I suppose, poor child, that had been worked out of her long ago. Words had no effect, and I left her with an appeal to the assembled groups around to rescue the poor crabs. From behind a rock in the distance I saw to my joy that force of numbers prevailed, and the prisoners were restored to the sea. As I returned home and was walking majestically past the nursery-maid and her charges, she, thinking to impose on me, jumped up and began dancing a war-dance on the sand-heap over (what she hoped I imagined) the buried crabs. I took no notice, and turned a deaf

From the Heart of the Rose

ear to her insulting remarks. I was content, I had saved the crabs.

Most of the people bathed from tents in a far-away bay, but some dug holes in the sand and undressed there, a mode of procedure much resembling the ostrich. Some hid behind a sheet elegantly pinned to the cliff. There was an unwritten code of honour that we should all sit with our faces seawards. We got Dick half into the sea one day, but it was cold, and he cried. "You should really have had the water warmed, mother," he gasped, as I drest him quickly. I *can't* describe the other figures bathing, they were too funny, and some were too fat, and pale pink flannelette is not an ideal material for bathing costumes. We all paddled—it may sound strange to you, but we did—and I kodaked every one, and you shall have some of the weird photographs I took. Some of them are—well, perhaps, *not quite*. AUNT MONICA.

P.S.—I do not suppose an aunt ought ever to paddle, but then, remember, "nothing matters at Margate."

XLVI

Midsummer in a garden.

I CAN only write of the heat this month. Even the roses are weary and droop their heads, and all the flowers are tired out by the sun. We try to water, but the task is hopeless. I think evening is the best time, for we can sit out in the middle of the parched lawn and listen to the weir or the purr of the puckridge, or watch the stars. All the other birds are silent this month. At the beginning we heard the chiff-chaff and the whisper of the black-cap's song, but they have entirely ceased now. The only prominent note is the greenfinch, he really *loves* the heat, and it makes me realise how hot the day is when I hear the long jarring note over and over again. He has never once stopped singing all the month. Now and then the wood-pigeon and the turtle-dove remind us of their presence by a "coo" and a "purr" in the trees, and we have heard the meadow-pipit

From the Heart of the Rose

and the lark in the field, and now and then, as we have wandered over the common, a stonechat has snapt at us from a gorse-bush, but beyond these few birds we have not heard a sound, and we miss their evening hymn more than words can say. I am sorry birds are so silent in July, for, being the month we sit out of doors all day long, we could listen to their songs more perfectly, and judge, undisturbed, of their merits. Now and again at night we hear the owls as they fly over the rose garden quite close to the house. Fly-catchers were still feeding their young, early this month, up till nearly eight o'clock in the evening. We found some pretty wild flowers at Newtown by the river. "Touch-me-not" was a new flower to me, with its curious orange flower. You know the seed-vessel explodes at the slightest touch, scattering the seed to a great distance. The mimulus grew there, and the white and mauve comfrey with their bell-shaped blossoms, and many others. We used to watch the trout feeding, and one day we surprised a snake, who was so frightened at seeing us that he straightway took a header into the stream and swam across. I wrote an account of that walk by the river for *The Sun-Children's Budget*. Do you know that charming little quarterly? (published by Wells Gardner,

From the Heart of the Rose

Darton, & Co.) It is all about Botany, and its object is to create the love of flowers in children's hearts. Not only a love for flowers, but a reverence for and knowledge of God's treasure-house. I quote one sentence in the October number : "The more we know the more there is to learn, for the last page of Nature's book can never be turned, and we shall find new beauties in God's beautiful world till the time comes when we shall cull for ourselves flowers in Paradise." We stayed at the Grange on our way home. I must tell you of a flower-border there, for it was simply a dream. It was in front of an old wall covered with roses, magnolias, winter-sweet, and rare vines. Towering at the back was a row of tall white *Nicotiana sylvestris*, then came rose *Lavatera Trimestris*. In front of these crimson malope and pink cosmos, and then the white star *Nicotiana affinis* and pink clarkia. Nearer still a line of dark crimson antirrhinum and two shades of godetia, the last being gloriosa, a very brilliant crimson colour, and at our feet a broad edge of thyme. It was a mass of crimson-pink and white, the daintiest, prettiest border I have ever seen. There was a dark yew-hedge on the other side of the walk bordering the rosary, and a quaint white high-latticed gate at the farther end.

From the Heart of the Rose

There was another broad yellow border there of every shade. Nasturtiums were trained up a rustic trellis at the back, then pale primrose sunflowers stood in a royal row with their faces to the sun. Tall mulleins were there, snapdragon, tagetes, musk. I cannot remember all the flowers, but all I know is that it was most effective and quite a work of art. But then the lady of that garden excels in the arrangement of her flower-borders, and she is proud of her lavender edging and masses of bloom.

Oats are nearly cut round here, which makes me sad. I love to see the golden fields waving in the breeze, and the shadows of a passing cloud across the corn. Hay is nearly all in, only a few loads caught by the rain waiting patiently to be stacked. If it is hot here, what must you feel shut up in a town? As I sit in the garden writing at sunset, and the fierce sun has sunk behind the firs, leaving only the golden glow, I long to have you here.

Is all well with you?

MONICA.

XLVII

Verses from over the sea by Dr. Batterson.

I HAVE had a letter from New York this morning from an unknown friend. He has sent me his book, and I have sent him mine, so our pens have forged a chain reaching across the sea. He tells me the average American cares nothing for flowers and trees and birds, and that "the Almighty Dollar" means a vast deal more than appears on the surface. He sends me some lovely verses, which I know will comfort and teach many, as they have helped me. I bless him for the gift.

" If any little word of ours
Can make one life the brighter,
If any little song of ours
Can make one heart the lighter ;
God help us speak that little word,
And take our bit of singing,
And drop it in some lonely vale,
To set the echoes ringing.

From the Heart of the Rose

If any little love of ours
Can make one life the sweeter,
If any little care of ours
Can make one step the fleeter ;
If any little help may ease
The burden of another,
God give us love and care and strength,
To help along each other.

If any watchful thought of ours
Can make some work the stronger,
If any cheery smile of ours
Can make its brightness longer ;
Then let us speak that thought to-day,
With tender eyes a-glowing,
So God may grant some weary one
Shall reap from our glad sowing."

After all, little kindnesses are best ; noble deeds are not given to every one to do, but we can follow the heart's lead and make "some life the brighter." MONICA.

XLVIII

There was a letter in the post-bag for the boy, from an uncle in Australia. It gave a vivid picture of the life there, and seemed to span the broad space between one garden and another.

.

SOME day, little Dick, I suppose you will be a soldier, and I can imagine the Boers running from you when they hear you play the drum! A lot of our young Australian lads have gone to the war, and I hear make good soldiers, as they are used to roughing it and camping out, and watching at nights their flocks and herds against wild natives, or wild dogs, called "dingoes." I wish you and father and mother could come out to Queensland and see all the wonderful things here. Parrots of all colours, and cockatoos in thousands often flying about, and at night great big bats, called flying foxes, come in countless numbers, and feed on the blossoms

From the Heart of the Rose

of the trees and on any fruit that may be in their neighbourhood. In the daytime they all sleep, hanging head down by their feet, in some quiet, out-of-the-way place, where they collect in countless numbers, and are supposed to be asleep; but any one getting near them can hear some of them screaming at each other, apparently quarrelling as to who has the best right to the particular branch they are hanging on, and, if the wind happens to blow from them to you, their "colony" (as it is called) is easily located! Then, from the verandah of our house you will see all sorts of curious fish swimming about or jumping out of the sea, perhaps only a hundred yards away, just like porpoises playing about, or darting like lightning after smaller fish; then comes a huge school of mullet fresh from the sea, and you see hundreds of these beautiful silvery fish leaping six to eight feet out of the water in pure sport, each fish apparently seeing who could jump the highest, until a shark or savage kingfish or sailor comes along, and then there is such a "How do you do" to get out of his or their way, and the water is soon like a boiling caldron made by the efforts of the multitude of smaller fish trying to escape. Many of course are

From the Heart of the Rose

caught by their savage pursuers, but many escape, to be caught perhaps another day by the fishermen in their nets. Then perhaps, if you are still looking out, you will see a huge round fish jump bodily out of the water, and after a whisk of his tail in the air come down flop, making a great splash. Once when I was cruising about Torres Straits in a small steamer, a big fish (a bonito) jumped clean over the ship and hit me on the back as he passed! Your father will say this is a tall yarn, but it is true! . . . When you are tired of paddling in the sea, you can get on one of our little ponies and ride out into the bush and see kangaroos and wallabies hopping about, some likely enough carrying their little ones about in a bag, with only their wee heads peeping out. But you must be on the look-out, or you might tread on a nasty brown snake or run against a green tree-snake that has climbed into the bush you are riding by. A little farther on, you will come to a settler's house and the owner will be glad to see you, and will let you pick as many ripe oranges as you like, his trees being literally covered with big orange-fruit. How you would enjoy them. I forgot to tell you about the pelicans that float about, quite close to our house look-

From the Heart of the Rose

ing out for fish, which, when they see within reach, down goes their great big beak and up it comes, and with a big gurgle and gulp down goes poor fish. Good-bye, Dick; be good to your mother, who was very good to me. . . .

H. M.

XLIX

To Little Mary, who made a request.

I HAVE no time to sit down and write
a "real piece of poetry" for your book,
but I enclose two verses with my love,
which came to me as I looked out of the
window this morning, and saw swallows pass-
ing overhead in goodly companies.

Swallow, Swallow, carry me
Over land and over sea ;
Take me where the roses give
Blossoms ev'ry day we live.

Swallow, Swallow, carry me
Where the sunbeams circle thee,
Where the sky is ever blue
And the world is ever true.

Tell me if I am to write more.

MONICA.

L

To one interested in history.

TO-DAY we drove up on to Wash Common, the high ground overlooking the town of Newbury, to see the Falkland Memorial. It was a glorious day, and the air seemed to breathe peace on the very spot where the first battle at Newbury was fought in 1643. I suppose you know all about Falkland, "the purest of martyrs," as Dr. Arnold calls him. This obelisk was erected in 1878 by the late Earl of Carnarvon, in memory of Lucius Carey, Viscount Falkland, and of the other Cavaliers who fell in this battle. Four inscriptions have been carved on the obelisk, one on the north side in English, describing the object with which the memorial was erected. On the west, south, and east are extracts from Burke, from Livy, and from Thucydides, all extremely well chosen, and all containing sentiments from which no good man, whatever be his politics, could reasonably dissent.

From the Heart of the Rose

From the steps you see a very picturesque view, including the woods of Highclere and the Hampshire Downs beyond. To-day a row of tiny children sat in a solemn row there while a child, not older but a trifle bolder, stood in front of the others giving them a singing lesson. Their baby voices were shouting "Soldiers of the Queen," little dreaming of the soldiers who died on that very spot, and the hearts broken. Would they in their turn, poor little mites, grow up and fight for the King? At any rate the battle of life was before them, and they must perforce win—or lose. When we returned, our host, who is brimful of all knowledge, told us all about Falkland, for I must own to a very hazy recollection of the man. As you know, he and Hampden were the two most eminent men who took part in the Civil War of the seventeenth century. By the year 1643 Falkland was "weary of the war." We read that when he was among his friends, after a deep silence and frequent sighs, he "would with a shrill and sad accent ingeminate the word 'Peace! Peace!' and would passionately profess that the very agony of war, and the view of the calamities and desolation which the kingdom did and must endure, took his sleep from him, and

From the Heart of the Rose

would shortly break his heart." And in another book I found, "As he could not heal his country's disease, he longed for death, that he might cease to be a witness of her agonies. At Gloucester he exposed himself in vain to danger. On the morning of the battle of Newbury, September 20, 1643, he knew the desired hour had come. He was weary of the times, he said, but he would 'be out of it ere night.' Placing himself as a volunteer under Sir John Byron, he chose his opportunity. Riding at a gap in the hedge through which the enemy's bullets were pouring, and from which all his comrades stood aloof, he was struck down in an instant. By a death which is scarcely distinguishable from suicide, Falkland closed his eyes to the horrors which he loathed . . . his heart was even greater than his mind!" Poor Cavalier! Soldiers should be made of tougher stuff than he. Yet we would fain wish that all men possessed his tender heart. He was thirty-four years of age, cut off in the splendour of his manhood, and glad to die. It is a pathetic story. John Hampden, the Roundhead, was only forty-nine when he fell at Chalgrove; he has a rival monument there, right richly deserved. I send you the quotation from Burke. "The blood of

From the Heart of the Rose

man is well shed for our family, for our friends, for our God, for our country, for our kind; the rest is vanity, the rest is crime." Falkland's "purity and sensitiveness of character made him incapable of being a partisan, and also unfitted him for action in such stormy times." I think myself he died of a broken heart.

MONICA.

P.S.—There is a pathetic custom in America, which doubtless will be carried out in South Africa, that in a given week people visit the cemeteries and lay wreaths on the tombs of those who returned to die from wounds; while in the South, wherever a soldier lies buried (without a thought as to the side on which he fought), the grave is decorated. Controversy is swallowed up in the Eternal Peace.

LI

On the growing of auratum lilies.

I SAW the most beautiful auratum lilies the other day. They were quite eight feet high, and some had fifty blossoms or more. I simply *ached* to know how to grow them, and at last I have learnt the secret. Let me whisper it to you. First get your bulbs, and then dig a hole eighteen inches deep and place a bulb at the bottom. Then fill up the hole with peat mixed with plain cow manure. If you cannot get peat, mix loam leaf-mould and cow manure. Please remember all the roots of the lily grow out of the stem, and not under the bulb, so they must be nourished accordingly. You must grow them in sheltered places, and they do beautifully among azaleas or rhododendrons, and I like them to have a dark background, when possible. We ought all to grow lilies in the open more than we do.

MONICA.

LII

On the growing of bulbs for winter cheer.

I WISH you could see all my bulbs in the drawing-room. Some are already in flower, and the others are growing beautifully. I fill every china bowl and glass or pottery bowl I can find. The more the merrier. I begin about the end of September. This year I have narcissus, and I often have scillas, but hyacinths are the best after all. First put a thick layer of moss, tolerably firmly pressed down, and lay the bulbs thereon. Then keep putting more moss between and around until the basin is almost full. You must press the moss in, not in little short wads, but in long pieces so that one piece will bind in with another? I keep the bowls about a month in the dark, in an airy cupboard if you have no room you can shut up, and when they have made plenty of roots I put them in some light window. They must be watered about once a week, above all

From the Heart of the Rose

they must never be allowed to get dry. When you water them turn them on one side, so that all water which is not absorbed by the moss may run out. Remember there is no drainage in your pots. Of course, if you are fortunate enough to possess a greenhouse you can put them there after their sojourn in the dark, and then they will come on quicker. White hyacinths and the palest pink are my favourites, and I much prefer the single ones. They all look lovely in the green bowls made at our Wrecclesham Pottery. Robert Sydenham of Birmingham tells you to grow them in fibre and charcoal, &c., but I find moss is quite enough, if kept damp and not *wet*. MONICA.

LIII

One day Monica went to see the little pottery at Wrecclesham, within easy distance of her home. She loved to see the real old potter's-wheel at work, and the wet clay moulded so cleverly, and the pretty green pottery lying on the floor of the wooden shed which serves as showroom. It was a joy to climb the rough ladder and watch the kiln being packed, and to realise that every pot and pan "must be tried by fire." When she came back she found a letter lying on her desk from Staffordshire. It was a strange coincidence, and the comparison raised thereby was full of interest.

DEAR MONICA,—You have no doubt noticed the war which is being waged in the House of Commons and elsewhere over Amended Special Rules which should become law for the Potting Industry on 1st July next. The difference has arisen on the proposed "standard of insolubility," the manufacturers demanding the right to

From the Heart of the Rose

use a five per cent. standard, and even this only for white and light-coloured glazes, whilst the Home Secretary (on expert advice) requires a two per cent. standard of insolubility for *all* glazes. We are told that ruin stands before us if this standard is enforced, and except for the historical fact that these predictions have been made whenever any measure of reform has been wrung from the manufacturers, we might be daunted by their determined attitude. I think I can see matters from their point of view ; competition between them is very keen, and whilst one is making experiments in glazes, another, who is less scrupulous, may get all the orders. Many manufacturers are far from scientific, and, having adopted a useful working formula for glaze and body of ware, they are satisfied. Raw lead is a cheap and convenient material for glaze, if put on in lumps almost it would flow to a smooth surface in the oven. You can hardly go wrong with it, and it takes less fire than any other glaze. There is the other side of the question—the suffering and death from its use. But many large manufacturers live in the country, and small ones don't care, and they have not any of them any liability for loss and suffering. This comes out of the pockets of the workpeople, either as the actual sufferers or as ratepayers.

From the Heart of the Rose

The lead often kills swiftly and suddenly, but quite as often it cripples without shortening life. It is such a large subject, I hardly know where to begin to tell you about it. All who work in dipping-house are exposed to the danger; dippers and the boys they employ, glost-placers, kiln-firemen, ware-cleaners, are constantly in contact with lead, liquid, or dust. The poison is absorbed through the pores or by inhalation. A very large number of the sufferers are the ware-cleaners. This is not what is called a trade, it is simply labour learnt in a few days at any age. Men and women crowd to work in the lead because a living wage is easily obtained out of it. By the early death of the father (and most potters die young) the elder daughter perhaps becomes the breadwinner of the family, and she takes work which is regular and well paid, say majolica-painting or ground-laying; and when you think how popular the coloured tiles and tinted ware are, you will understand that a great many are employed to make them. I wish we could educate people not to like things which are merely "pretty." There is a litho-transfer process which is substituted for printing, transferring, and "filling in." We ought to dislike it. There is no brush work or expression in it, and I believe it

From the Heart of the Rose

wears off, and it is very harmful to do. If we could get rid of false ideals, we should prefer things that are obviously simple, like the quaint, brightly coloured, "sponged" patterns which Mr. Reeves produces for the foreign market entirely without lead, unless we could afford real art work.

This district may be described as miles of slums built round factories, and shrouded by dim, tainted air. No wonder people flee from it—though if one has the courage to stay on, one gets accustomed to the dimness, and even discovers gleams of bright light or splendid lurid cloud effects. The first impression is of wandering through an extended tract of country all overspread with a pall of smoke and dreary ugliness, and wondering how people live at all, how it is that the children, who with grimy faces and ragged clothes play on the cinder-heaps, chucking bits of coal instead of stones into ash-coloured streams, are often well grown and have an appearance of vigorous health. Is it the bracing air, or ample food, or the smoke, which, whilst it kills vegetation, no doubt also destroys many germs of disease? It is not often that one sees vigorous health in the older people—there are too evident traces on many faces and forms of trade diseases, of the great standing mystery of how

From the Heart of the Rose

the poor live and suffer, and of the intemperance which claims many victims. Quite a considerable number suffer from lead-poisoning; and even where it does not amount to a disabling illness, one guesses that it accounts for the extreme look of debility which strikes one in so many.

You will be tired of this gloomy history of suffering and poverty. It is wonderful that we can be light-hearted here; but we are somehow, and I think without being hard-hearted. We are always ready to give to cases of distress, and having done this we dress smartly, and laugh and talk, and are not over careful for the morrow. And now, at any rate, there is a substantial hope that the record of irremediable suffering will be closed. You will, I think, follow the Arbitration on the Amended Special Rules, which is about to take place, with intense interest. Let us hope it may establish the fact that a double silicate of lead or even leadless glaze are commercially serviceable and adaptable to all purposes, and that the manufacturers may therefore be forced to adopt one of these. I wish we might hope at the same time to get back the artistic feeling and skilled and deliberate hand-work of the past—that really beautiful china may be produced under perfectly healthy conditions.

LIV

*From one of His Majesty's Inspectors of Schools,
Monica having asked for the recipe.*

TAKE a two-gallon jar and place
therein
A measured gallon of unsweetened gin,
Three quarts of sloes well pick'd with care
and pain,
With five half-pounds of sugar in the cane,
On almond's bitter essence deftly pounce,
And o'er the perfumed whole pour half an
ounce,
Cork tight and shake, then shake and turn
again,
Till twice three moons have pass'd to mortal
men.
So shall a fragrant liquor, rosy red,
Reward your toil and cheer your weary head.

LV

To a lover of garden books.

I HAVE just been reading a garden book which delights me, and I feel sure would delight you too, "Flowers and Gardens," by Forbes Watson. It has just been reprinted, with an introduction by Canon Ellacombe. The whole book is so *real*, it is not padded with quotations and extracts from other garden books, but is true knowledge. The author died when he was young, but we bless him for this legacy he left behind him. When you read you learn to see the gold in the crocus as you have never seen it before. "It is saffron in a dull light, and in a light still duller it may be almost brown. But what is it when placed in the unclouded sunshine, the only time when the flower is fairly describable as a cup? The petals are orange here and yellow there, and everywhere display that shifting glance which we have already described as only comparable to brightest gold, together with a

From the Heart of the Rose

restless flow which, as the sunbeams stir it, seems absolutely to leave the walls, and roll like a fiery atmosphere within." He tells us the purple crocus looks ugly in a border. I wish you could look out of my window now and see the purple carpet under the chestnut-tree, each amethyst cup wide open to the sun, with bees dipping in and out. "Colour is the grand source of expression in the crocus." I like this word "expression." But it is there in the purple as in the gold. I know so well the *expression* of a violet, a lily of the valley, and a conceited holyhock, a tulip is a little vain, a sweet pea gentle. I wonder if the expression of a flower ever carries the same message to more than one individual. It would be curious to note. I suppose it might happen so if the heart-strings were tuned alike. The only thing is, that, as God has never made two people on the same pattern, we might never read the book of Nature alike. . . . And it is well that it is so.

Again we turn the pages and read the chapter on the cowslip. "Its poetry is the poetry of common life, but of the most delicious common life that can exist." How true this is. Can you imagine a gardenia having a conversation with a cowslip? or a tuber-rose caring to hear of meadows where

From the Heart of the Rose

the lark nests. A cowslip always makes me feel young again, it "carries us away to thoughts of dairies, flocks, and pasturages, and the manners of a simple, primitive time, some golden age of shepherd-life long since gone by." Forbes Watson wished to woo back to our borders old-fashioned favourites, "quaint strange plants which are expelled from our modern border," but I think this wish is being fulfilled more or less, and his book is bearing fruit. He is much opposed to planting for effect, each individual plant must be noted and loved, and also he would do away with all "planting out"; flowers must never be disturbed. He likes a look of happy rest among the plants, and you cannot find this in the spring garden and geranium border. But if you followed this plan of his you would miss so much beauty. I love my spring garden; and all my greenness needs the brightness of bedded-out plants. I love my rockery, because I know every tiny plant, but my patches of red, blue, and yellow on the green lawn comfort me too. I like a garden to be friendly and true, and a place where you may pick a flower at will to love and toy with as you sit under the trees listening to the birds. I do not entirely approve of a "gardener's garden," but we need not go to extremes in

From the Heart of the Rose

anything. The reason we all turn to Nature, and Nature-books, is because in this unreal age we crave reality ; and that is why I want all Nature-books to be utterly real, and that is why I like this particular book so much. Please read it.

MONICA.

LVI

A letter came from Yorkshire, a hunting letter, from a hunting friend. Monica proudly resented one sentence! She herself had hunted—in her time!

YOU write to me, Monica, from Surrey and bid me tell you news. Do you not know that I am like the poor Indian Viceroy who had much ado to remain on his horse, and when addressed snapped out, "Don't speak to me. *Can't* you see I am busy riding?" And *I* am busy—very busy—hunting, and can hardly waste time in writing to one so ignorant that I verily believe you might be heard saying, "The *dogs* are barking and their tails wagging," and never realise the iniquity of your remark. However, if I write it is hunting or nothing, but I promise to make a few digressions for the sake of a weaker sister. We had a great day yesterday. Our hounds were invited to hunt in Wensleydale, so early in the morning we left Aske, famous in history from its

From the Heart of the Rose

association with Robert Aske and the ill-fated Pilgrimage of Grace, and drove in a carriage and four through picturesque old Richmond with its royal castle that once belonged to Constance of Brittany and her son. Underneath the castle, in a vast underground cavern, lie King Arthur and his valiant knights waiting for some brave adventurer to penetrate to their place of rest, and awake them with a blast of the mystic horn that hangs at its entrance. Then they will rise to right the wrong; trouble, taxation, school boards, and rates will vanish, and England will be "merrie England" again for ever and aye.

Well, we drove up and down fearsome hills with lovely views across to the Hambletons. Far away we could see Rolleston Scar and the white cliffs of Sutton Brow, where the Evil One, being worsted in an argument, lost his temper (if he ever had one) and leapt across the valley so hot with rage that a huge rock stuck to his foot and was dropped half a mile away on the top of Hood Hill, where all can see it now.

Arrived at the meet, we mounted our horses and found friends from far and wide; many bearing well-known names in Yorkshire annals, such as Scrope and Graham, Talbot and Wyvill, Fitzwilliam and Dundas,

From the Heart of the Rose

Lascelles and Powlett and Beresford. Let us single out two. Graham of Norton Conyers, whose cavalier ancestor, sorely stricken on the field of Marston Moor, was carried by his gallant steed back to his home and up the old oak staircase with its broad shallow steps, where the hoof-marks are imprinted still. And Scrope, the best and noblest name in Wensleydale, descended from the brave Earl of Wilts, who was faithful till death to his master, Richard II., his head being brought in a basket as an acceptable present to the usurping Henry of Lancaster.

“Mais revenons à nos moutons,” as the French say, which, being freely interpreted, may mean the Zetland hounds in the Bedale country. We found soon, and then good-bye to all conversation, for the hounds rattled down near Spennithorne, under Hornby, close under Leyburn, where they checked a moment, much to my relief, as there are walls or fences every sixty yards or so, and we had to do a deal of jumping. The ground is firm and all grass, but the fences rather awkward; still, it was the greatest fun, and we all rode desperately. Then the fox swung down to the river Yore, and we hurtled down the hill parallel to the river lane but on the Wensley side of it. Hounds crossed the river, and we had to ford. It was most

From the Heart of the Rose

alarming. Four men had to swim, their horses being washed down by the current. One poor beast was very near drowning, and I don't know if they got it out. (Perhaps the Water Kelpie, well known to haunt these meadows, dragged it down.) I got across all right, but my foot was wet, even on my seventeen-hands hunter. On we went, up the hill at an angle, over great grass fields, and stone walls pulled down by active farmers, and ran to ground at the top end of Middleham Moor. They dug out the poor fox and killed three fields off. It is a record, as the Bedale huntsman, who has been there nineteen years, has never seen a fox take that line before.

It was so curious seeing the racehorses exercising just above us on the moor. Wensleydale looked beautiful, and I pointed out Bolton Castle to my companion, where poor Mary of Scotland spent many weary months under the charge of Lord Scrope, and the wooded banks of the Shawl, where she is said to have been recaptured in a wild effort to escape. How often she must have ridden with her guards over the moors where we are hunting now, but under what different circumstances! She in the shadow of gloom and despair, and I with the joy of showing the grand country I know and love

From the Heart of the Rose

to one who had returned safely to me from the hardships and dangers of the African campaign.

After a while we went slowly down to Middleham Castle, and rode round by the ruined tower where died the young son of Richard of Gloucester and Anne Neville, and then on from Middleham to Danby Bridge, where we found again and had a second run. At last we decided that horses and riders had done enough, and we were far—very far—from home. So we rested awhile at Constable Burton and started soon after five o'clock, past sheets of snowdrops, over the beck to Hauxwell, and across the moors to Richmond. It is the sort of country that "pulls hard" (as my little cousin says of her bed in the morning). We saw grouse on the moor, and the sky turned green, and the air had a touch of frost in it. Coming down into the last valley before Richmond I saw fat primrose-buds. The town-lights were on by the time we overlooked the old borough on its steep hillsides, and it was most picturesque. The curfew bell, which still sounds here every evening, had not yet tolled the passing day. We got home soon after seven, a little tired, very hungry, and ever so happy. . . .

LVII

Monica had a tea-party. It rained hard and they could not go into the garden, so she offered a prize to the one who did this page of dictation with the fewest mistakes.

THE most skilful gauger was a maligned cobbler, possessing a poignant disposition, who drove a pedlars' waggon, using a whip as an instrument of coercion to tyrannise over his pony, shod with corks; he was a Galilean and a Sadducee, and had a phthisical catarrh, diphtheria, and a bilious intermittent erysipelas. A certain sibyl, with a soubriquet of a gipsy, went into an ecstasy on seeing him measure peeled potatoes, and saccharine tomatoes, and a heap of beans without dyeing or singeing his ignitable cue, or becoming paralysed with hemorrhage, lifting her eyes to the ceiling of the cupola of the capital to conceal her unparalleled embarrassment, making a rough curtsy and not harassing him with mystifying, stupefy-

From the Heart of the Rose

ing, rarefying innuendoes, she gave him a conch, a bouquet of lilies, mignonette, fuchsia, and dahlias, a treatise on —, a copy of the Apocrypha in hieroglyphics, a daguerreotype of Mendelssohn, a kaleidoscope, a drachm phial of ipecacuanha, a teaspoonful of naphtha for delible purposes, a clarionet, some liquorice, a surcingle, a cornelian of symmetrical proportions; a chronometer with movable balance-wheel, a box of loose dominoes, and a catechism. The gauger, who was a trafficking rectifier, and a parishioner preferred a woollen surtout, his choice was referable to a vacillating, occasionally recurring idiosyncrasy, he woefully uttered the apophthegm. Life is chequered, but schism, apostasy, heresy, villainy shall be punished: the sibyl apologising answered: "There is rateably something eligible between a conferable ellipsis and a tri-syllabic diæresis."

LVIII

To one interested in plants.

I HAVE just had a book lent me which I am sure would rejoice your heart. It is the "Natural History of Plants," from the German of Anton Kerner von Maritann, by F. W. Oliver. I opened the book at a chapter on the protection of green leaves against attacks of animals. Did you know that "certain wild vetches which would furnish very good fodder for grazing mammals are regularly seen in the prickly hedges along the roads, and under spring bushes"? Some plants are protected by poison. The leaves of the deadly nightshade are poisonous to the larger grazing animals, and so by them left undisturbed; but they are non-poisonous to a small beetle, and prove its most important food. Others are protected by spines or thorns. "The most important rôle in the defence against food-seeking animals is performed by the organs terminating in strong, tapering, shard points, which wound offenders, and may be called the weapons of plants." The nettle

From the Heart of the Rose

again is protected by stinging hairs or bristles. How wonderful nature is! Then I read about our mistletoe boughs. The dissemination of this plant is "effected through the agency of birds—thrushes in particular—which feed upon the berries and deposit the undigested seeds upon the branches of trees." The root sinks into the wood, the branches are developed above. I never knew before that the scent of a flower served to allure such animals as transfer the pollen from flower to flower or plant to plant. About five hundred different scents can be distinguished. Can you picture yourself trying to count so many scents? It seems an impossibility, does it not? Then there are wonderful chapters on the sensitiveness of insect-loving plants. "If a tiny bit of fine human hair is put on a leaf of sun-dew it causes a movement at once; if so minute a thing were placed on the human tongue, the most sensitive part of the body, it would not be perceived at all." Do get the book and read it, every page is full of interest, and will show you how utterly ignorant we all are!

MONICA.

Handbooks of Practical Gardening

Under the General Editorship of
HARRY ROBERTS

Crown 8vo. Illustrated. Cloth, 2s. 6d. net.

The following Volumes will be published during the Spring:—

VOL. I.—THE BOOK OF ASPARAGUS. With sections also on Celery, Salsify, Scorzonera, and Seakale; together with a chapter on their cooking and preparation for the table. By CHARLES ILOTT, F.R.H.S., Lecturer on Horticulture to the Cornwall County Council.

VOL. II.—THE BOOK OF THE GREENHOUSE. With a special chapter on the little Town Greenhouse. By J. C. TALLACK, F.R.H.S., Head Gardener at Shipley Hall.

VOL. III.—THE BOOK OF THE GRAPE. By H. W. WARD, F.R.H.S., for 25 years Head Gardener at Longford Castle; Author of "My Gardener."

VOL. IV.—THE BOOK OF OLD-FASHIONED FLOWERS. By HARRY ROBERTS, Author of "The Chronicle of a Cornish Garden."

Other Volumes in preparation.

JOHN LANE : LONDON: VIGO STREET, W.
NEW YORK: 251 FIFTH AVENUE.

BOOKS FOR COUNTRY HOUSES

The Natural History of Selborne. By GILBERT WHITE. Edited, with Introduction, by GRANT ALLEN. With upwards of 200 Illustrations by EDMUND H. NEW. Fcap. 4to. Price 21s. net.

"The most delightful form that can be imagined. The attraction lies chiefly in finding the masterpiece so admirably illustrated by Mr Edmund H. New. In black and white line work of this class he has no equal." (*Country Life*.)

"We have never seen this book in a more agreeable or appropriate form." (*St James's Gazette*.)

"Mr Edmund New's drawings are not merely artistic, but full of the poetry of association." (*Speaker*.)

The Compleat Angler. By IZAAK WALTON and CHARLES COTTON. Edited, with an Introduction, by RICHARD LE GALLIENNE. With Photogravure Portraits of Walton and Cotton, and over 250 Illustrations and Cover designed by EDMUND H. NEW. Fcap. 4to. Price 15s. net.

"A delightful edition, charmingly illustrated." (*Punch*.)

"Of Mr Edmund H. New's illustrations we cannot speak too highly. We have never seen better." (*Spectator*.)

"One of the best editions; one, we cannot help thinking, that Walton himself would have preferred." (*Daily Chronicle*.)

All About Dogs. A Book for Doggy People. By CHARLES HENRY LANE. With 85 Full-page Illustrations (including nearly 70 champions) by R. H. MOORE. Gilt top. Demy 8vo. Price 7s. 6d. net.

"One of the most interesting contributions to the literature of the day." (*Daily Chronicle*.)

"Mr Lane's book is worthy of a place on the shelves of any sporting library." (*Outlook*.)

"A most interesting, indeed, an entirely fascinating book." (*St James's Gazette*.)

ORDER FROM YOUR BOOKSELLER

BOOKS ABOUT GARDENS

Seven Gardens and a Palace. By
"E. V. B.," Author of "Days and Hours in
a Garden." Illustrated by F. L. B. GRIGGS
and ARTHUR GORDON. Crown 8vo. Price 5s.
net. *Third Edition.*

"A charming companion for a leisure hour." (*World.*)

"Altogether a pleasant and fragrant book, with something of the sense
of lavender about it." (*Review of the Week.*)

The Chronicle of a Cornish Garden.
By HARRY ROBERTS. With Seven ideal Illus-
trations by F. L. B. GRIGGS. Crown 8vo.
Price 5s. net.

"'The Chronicle' is written in a frank unaffected style, and will suggest
useful ideas to other garden lovers." (*The Literary World.*)

"It is written with grace and knowledge, and will please as well as
teach." (*Bookman.*)

A Garden in the Suburbs. By Mrs
LESLIE WILLIAMS. With Eight Illustrations.
Crown 8vo. Price 5s. net.

Stray Leaves from a Border Garden.
By Mrs MILNE-HOME. With Eight Illustrations
by F. L. B. GRIGGS. Crown 8vo. Price 6s. net.

My Vicarage Garden. By Canon ELLA-
COMBE, Author of "In a Gloucestershire
Garden," &c. With Illustrations by F. L.
B. GRIGGS. Crown 8vo. Price 5s. net.
In preparation.

JOHN LANE: LONDON: VIGO STREET, W.
NEW YORK: 251 FIFTH AVENUE.

BOOKS ABOUT GARDENS

In the Garden of Peace. By HELEN MILMAN
(Mrs Caldwell Crofton). With 24 Illustrations and
Cover designed by EDMUND H. NEW. Crown 8vo.
Price 5s. net. *Third Edition.*

"Sincerity is the note of the whole book." (*Globe.*)

Outside the Garden. By HELEN MILMAN (Mrs
Caldwell Crofton). With 24 Illustrations and Cover
by EDMUND H. NEW. Crown 8vo. Price 5s. net.

"'Outside the Garden' fully maintains Mrs Crofton's reputation as one
of Nature's keenest observers." (*Daily Chronicle.*)

My Roses and How I Grew Them. By
HELEN MILMAN (Mrs Caldwell Crofton). With a
Cover designed by EDMUND H. NEW. Crown 8vo.
Price 1s. 6d. net. *Third Edition.*

"Pleasantly written. . . . The book is such that a novice might
implicitly follow, while the more experienced may find useful hints."
(*Garden.*)

Flowers and Gardens. By FORBES WATSON.
With Photogravure Portrait of the Author. Edited,
with a Biographical Note by Canon ELLACOMBE.
Crown 8vo. Price 5s. net.

A reprint of a volume much sought after by garden lovers, which has
been out of print for many years.

Garden Craft, Old and New. By JOHN D.
SEDDING. With Nine Illustrations. New Edition.
Demy 8vo. Gilt top. Price 7s. 6d. net.

The Birds of My Parish. By E. H. POLLARD.
With Collotype Illustrations. Crown 8vo. Price
5s. net.

"Evelyn Pollard has a very delightful style of writing, and the story of
the Birds of her Parish is charming." (*Shooting Times.*)

ORDER FROM YOUR BOOKSELLER

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA LIBRARY

Los Angeles

This book is DUE on the last date stamped below.

Form L9-100m-9,'52 (A3105) 444

PR Crofton -
4518 From the heart of
C35f the rose .

UC SOUTHERN REGIONAL LIBRARY FACILITY



AA 000 365 294 8

PR
4518
C35f

